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# Citizenship Education and Identity: A comparative study across different schools in Northern Ireland and Israel

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# CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND IDENTITY

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# ABSTRACT

The thesis explores the relationship between citizenship education and identity in conflict-affected societies, by comparing the teaching of citizenship across different schools in Northern Ireland and Israel. In both societies, citizenship education addresses issues that are deemed controversial, such as the recent or ongoing conflict, citizenship, racism, and sectarianism. The theoretical framework brings together (neo) Marxist, post-colonialist, and critical pedagogical approaches to citizenship education and identity. Fieldwork was carried out in four different schools (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Palestinian), using individual interviews, focus group interviews, observations, and document analysis.

The major findings suggest that citizenship education at the policy, school, and classroom level is permeated by an avoidance of controversial issues related to the conflict and identity. In both societies, dominant narratives about the conflict glorify and justify violence, preventing a more critical examination of the conflicts. Additionally, educational policies promote a neoliberal/managerialist culture that censors the critical potential of citizenship education by determining that the priority for schools is academic standards and performativity. This limits teachers' ability to develop students' critical political thinking, to address controversial issues, and to challenge racist and sectarian views. However, the data also point to the employment of transformative forms of citizenship education, which became particularly evident among minorities.

The thesis contribution is threefold: first, drawing on a (neo) Marxist and postcolonial theoretical framework facilitates a structural examination of the state of citizenship education through the lens of power relations. Second, the multi-level study shows how processes of avoidance and censoring trickle down from the policy level into schools and into classrooms. Third, since citizenship education is permeated by sidestepping and censoring, it is at risk of reproducing the conflict, structural sectarianism and racism, and socio-economic inequalities. The thesis concludes with the assertion that there is a need

to provide teachers and schools with political and institutional support through offering training programmes; guidance and more time during the citizenship lesson to teach about controversial issues related to the conflict and identity. It also points at the need to further research pedagogies of critical teachers, who are able to promote transformative citizenship even in an uncongenial political environment that subtly promotes avoidance and censoring.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF FIGURES

# INTRODUCTION

*We should be masters and mistresses of our identities rather than letting them master us (Kwame Anthony Appiah)*

Educators, policymakers and activists argue that education takes an important role in contributing to the transition to peace in conflict-affected societies (Harris, 2004), by facilitating a better understanding of the nature of conflict (McEvoy et al., 2006). Yet, Bush and Saltarelli (2000) maintain that education can also be manipulated, being used to preserve privilege, to promote intolerance or as a form of cultural repression. According to them, education can be both a constructive and destructive force in conflict-affected societies. Controversial issues such as belonging and ownership of the land, the conflict's history or unresolved questions regarding collective rights and self-determination can complicate political education in these societies.

Indeed, at the time of writing this thesis, citizenship and identity remain 'buzzwords' in Northern Ireland and Israel. The 'exit' of the United Kingdom from the European Union was decided on 23 June 2016, even though the majority of Northern Ireland's population voted against it. At the heart of the complex issues raised by this decision is the question of the land border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The removal of the physical border was part of the peace negotiations between the different parties in Northern Ireland and its return would undermine the Good Friday Agreement from 1998 (Castle, 2018). Whilst this decision threatens the peace process in Northern Ireland, it also occurred in an atmosphere of increasing populism expressed through a public discourse and verbal and physical (racist) violence towards minorities across the United Kingdom (Burnett, 2017). Virdee and McGeever (2017) argued that the political debate about the Brexit reactivated "long-standing racialized structures of feelings about immigration and national belonging" (p.3), expressed through nostalgia for the British imperial project and a fear of the decline of 'Britishness'. Burnett (2017) further claimed that the referendum and other national policies (towards immigration) have in a sense provided a legitimisation of racist violence in the eyes of the perpetrators.

This trend has also affected schools throughout the United Kingdom. Cole (2017) explained that there has been an increase in racist incidents in schools along with demands for the need of education against racism by teachers who complain that there is a lack of political support. Similarly, in Northern Ireland, a poll conducted by the largest Teachers Union found that 67 percent of the teachers believed that sectarianism is a problem in their school, leading the union to complain that educational policies fail to address issues of sectarianism and racism since the education budget has been eroded (NASUWT, 2018). Consequently, according to the teachers and the union, there is lack of political support and funding for anti-racist education and education against sectarianism during a time when racism against minorities is on the rise and the peace process in Northern Ireland is threatened.

There are some parallels between the situation in Israel and Northern Ireland. Issues of citizenship and belonging have recently cropped up in Israel by the decision of the government to deport refugees to third countries against their will and against the protest

by humanitarian organisations in Israel and abroad (Bob, 2017). This decision is an example of the right-wing policy under the current government that generally promotes an ethnic-nationalist agenda (Mustafa and Ghanem, 2010). With the election of a new government in 2009, the citizenship curriculum became more nationalistic and religious under the current Education Minister Naftali Bennett (Cohen, 2017). Bennett promotes a stronger focus on the study of Jewish identity across different subjects, including citizenship education (Kashti, 2015).

One of the controversies that indicated this shift to the right in educational policies was the dismissal of the former citizenship coordinator of the Ministry of Education, Adar Cohen. Educators, academics and politicians denounced his dismissal as a political decision because members of the ministry perceived him as not being supportive enough of its ethnic-national agenda and the new controversial civics textbook (Nesher, 2012). Another controversy occurred in 2014 when the Ministry of Education reprimanded citizenship teacher Adam Verta, who was accused of expressing "extreme left" political views and "incitement against the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF)"[1] in class and eventually lost his job (Gravé-Lazi, 2014; Raved, 2014). These controversies point to a trend of silencing views that are critical of the government's educational agenda.

Besides these two controversies, the most recent dispute erupted around the review of the official citizenship textbook. The old textbook, which provided the basis for the new curriculum (Barak, 2005), was removed from circulation, claiming that it requires revision because it presents views that are too critical towards Israel (Skop, 2013). The revised chapters, published in 2013 promote the notion of Israel as a Jewish state while neglecting its democratic character and prioritising an ethnonational model of citizenship (Pinson, 2013). Additionally, Pinson (2013) criticised the fact that the collective national identity of the Arab-Palestinian minority is omitted since they are only described as religious and cultural subgroups in Israel. She also referred to the change in its pedagogical approach,

[1] In newspaper articles he was cited as calling the IDF immoral and accused it of using violence against civilians, he expressed his support for the party Hadash (considered left-wing with roots in the communist party) and stated that he considers Israel as not belonging to the Jews (Gravé-Lazi, 2014; Yashar, 2014).

which has shifted from encouraging critical thinking and discussion of controversial issues towards memorisation. Despite these concerns, the revised citizenship textbook "To be citizens in Israel: a Jewish and democratic state" and a pamphlet[2] for the final examination (*bagrut*) were released in 2016. Academics, educators, activists and the High Court of Justice resisted the release of the pamphlet primarily due to the lack of recognition of Palestinians as a collective group and their historical existence in the land (Skop, 2016).

Similar to the developments in the UK and Northern Ireland, the shift to the right in Israel is accompanied by a lack of support for education against racism. A report from the state comptroller on coexistence education argued that over the last 20 years, and mainly under the previous and current education ministers, the education ministry "has consciously chosen to bury the issue of education toward coexistence and prevention of racism" (Kashti, 2016:1). According to Kashti, the report also draws a connection between the lack of political will to fight racism and the manifestation of racist, anti-democratic and stereotyped views among school children.

Across both societies, the concern emerges that citizenship education does not address issues of diversity, racism, sectarianism and the conflict. In contrast, the current educational policies might be an expression of the continuation of conflict, since they avoid tackling these issues, in particular in Israel, where educational policies emphasise a national-religious understanding of citizenship over a democratic one (Agbaria, 2016; Agbaria, Mustafa and Jabareen, 2015; Pinson, 2013). Therefore, it is not surprising that some researchers expressed scepticism about the potential of citizenship education to contribute to conflict transformation. They suggest that citizenship education is permeated by an avoidance or censorship of discussing alternative narratives about the conflict. For example, Nets-Zehngut, Pliskin and Bar-Tal (2015) found that members of institutions in Israel that provide educational historical resources self-censor themselves from providing more accurate and alternative narratives about the conflict that might challenge the

[2] The process of drafting the new textbook and booklet for the civics matriculation examination did not include any Arab-Palestinian experts. The contributions by those experts who intended to strengthen democratic education were eventually removed or changed, which led some of the authors to demand their names to be removed (Hai, 2016; Newman, 2016).

dominant mainstream narrative. Similarly, Cohen (unpublished) argued in a recent study that teachers tend to avoid controversial public issues due to a culture of fear that has been heightened by the case of Adam Verta. According to Cohen, this culture refers to the fear of losing the job, of not fulfilling the school's expectations, of social isolation and sanctions due to being considered disloyal. In Northern Ireland, McEvoy (2007) warned that the citizenship curriculum leaves schools and teachers at liberty to decide whether to address controversial aspects of the conflict and sectarianism. This concern was further reinforced by research conducted by Loader and Hughes (2017) who found that controversial issues related to the conflict or discrimination are avoided in Shared Education programmes[3].

In general, research across conflict-affected societies has raised concerns that citizenship and peace education can do more harm than good, if it serves to cover-up structural violence, racism and sectarianism (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012; Davies, 2005; Gilborn, 2006). These findings point to two major issues: firstly, citizenship education is at risk of being permeated by avoidance and censorship of controversial but important issues. Secondly, the vacuum that is created through sidestepping might be exploited by identity politics that draws on nationalist and religious ideologies to promote particular political interests that are not countered or challenged.

In the light of these concerns, there is a need to investigate processes of avoidance and censorship in greater depth by tracing the impact of educational policies on citizenship education in schools and classrooms. This study seeks to address the gap in current research about citizenship education in conflict-affected societies, by looking at how citizenship is practised in the classroom by teachers and students in these societies. The ongoing tensions in Northern Ireland and Israel as well as recent political developments that manifest racism and sectarianism as serious problems demonstrate the importance of researching the relationship between identity politics and citizenship education.

[3] Shared education (SE) is a cross-community education policy that became statutory in 2016. Its purpose is to facilitate relationship building and collaboration between schools and teachers from different communities.

To explore this relationship between citizenship education and identity in policies, schools, and classrooms practices, the thesis draws on a theoretical framework bringing together (neo)-Marxist, post-colonialist and critical pedagogical approaches. Critical literature in the field of education, political theory and cultural studies provides a lens that can shed light on the complex relationship between identity and citizenship education because it focuses on deeper, structural issues. The theoretical framework is mainly guided by Gramsci's theoretical concept of cultural hegemony that situates citizenship education and identity in the context of power structures. Critical educators (Apple, 2004; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1997; 1980; Ladson-Billings, 1996) also refer to the work of post-colonialists to explain the connection between identity and education. For example, Banks (2004) argued that citizenship education tends to foreground majority group interests, identities, cultures and narratives while it omits those of minorities. Similarly, Giroux (1980; 1984) and Apple (2004) warned that cultural hegemony dominates through the curriculum by preserving the cultural capital of socio-economic elites. These processes are at risk to undermine education against racism (Banks, 2008; Gilborn, 2004) and critical pedagogy (Giroux, 1997). Drawing on this critical literature facilitates a deeper structural understanding of the relationship between identity and citizenship education in conflict-affected societies. Moreover, this theoretical framework provides explanations for the recent political developments, which indicate a failure of educational policies to address structural racism and sectarianism as well as to confront students with more balanced and complex understandings of the conflict.

Therefore, the thesis sets as its research objectives: to establish how cultural hegemony, framed as identity politics and neoliberalism is mediated through educational policies; to describe how citizenship is taught and understood in different classrooms; to analyse how contested issues related to the conflict and identity are addressed and finally to compare the challenges for citizenship education in the context of a conflict-ridden society (Israel) to a post-conflict society (Northern Ireland).

The study is driven by three research questions: firstly, it seeks to investigate how this theoretical framework applies in the context of citizenship education in Northern Ireland

and Israel, by looking at how cultural hegemony manifests itself in educational policies, schools and classrooms. Secondly, it compares the context of two different schools in each society that constitute the largest cultural or national groups in each country, which represent also the main groups affected by the conflict. This comparison facilitates an exploration of how different groups respond to cultural hegemony and how they construct identity, citizenship and the conflict. Thirdly, the literature referred to earlier suggests that citizenship education can only have a limited impact on conflict transformation. The thesis further examines if and how citizenship education can counter the continuation of conflict.

Since the main focus of the study is to explore structures and processes, it uses a qualitative approach (Bryman, 2012), by conducting a comparative case study of four schools in Northern Ireland and Israel (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Palestinian). For the purpose of triangulation, I decided to use a multi-method approach (Flick, 2014), which combines individual interviews; focus group interviews, observations and documentary analysis. The literature on qualitative research emphasised the importance of reflexivity and self-positioning on part of the researcher (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Harding, 1987; Lincoln and Guba, 2000). The motivation to embark on this study emerged from the experiences I have gained in a previous research project with citizenship teachers in Israel and a long-term interest in conflict transformation across different societies. The fact that I am an outsider in both Northern Ireland and Israel (despite having lived for more than two years in both countries) has influenced the conduct and analysis of the research. Therefore, I have dedicated a detailed section in the methodology about my personal background, my experiences and relationships with the participants in both contexts. Being an outsider has meant not only to become familiar with the research topic in different contexts but also to experience and learn about two societies that I did not grow up in. While the outsider role has posed various challenges along the journey, perhaps it has also contributed fresh insights and a different perspective to the research.

The major contribution of the thesis is that it investigates the practice of citizenship education in different classrooms in conflict-affected societies, by drawing on the critical literature about identity and citizenship education that focuses on structural issues and by being attentive to the particularities of each context.

The thesis starts by introducing the reader to the two contexts of Northern Ireland and Israel. It provides a brief discussion of the conflict and dominant political ideologies that underpin it, the education systems in both societies and the educational policies in the field of citizenship education. The goal is to show how citizenship education and the education system are affected and structured by the legacy of the conflict. After defining the challenges of citizenship education in these societies, the second Chapter outlines the theoretical framework of cultural hegemony, identity, citizenship, and citizenship education. Whilst different theoretical approaches to identity and citizenship are discussed, the thesis' framework is primarily influenced by (neo)-Marxist approaches, post-colonial understandings of identity and critical pedagogy. This frame gives rise to the research questions that examine how cultural hegemony is expressed through the curriculum, how different schools respond to educational policies and finally how citizenship education can contribute to conflict transformation. The Methodology Chapter outlines the conduct of the study, accompanied by a reflection on my background and its impact on the findings. Finally, Chapter four and five discuss the data, presenting the two major themes of avoidance and censoring in citizenship education in each society and how each school (Catholic, Protestant, Arab-Palestinian, and Jewish-Israeli)[4] responds to cultural hegemony. The thesis closes with a concluding Chapter that links the findings to the research questions, outlines the study's limitations and possible future directions.

[4] In the remainder of the thesis the communities will be referred to as 'Catholic' and 'Protestant', 'Arab-Palestinian' and 'Jewish-Israeli' since this is how members of both communities that I have encountered during the study tended to identify themselves first and foremost. While I am aware that the participants might view themselves in a plurality of different identities, the focus of this study on citizenship and the conflict singles out these identities as the most relevant or dominant ones.

# CHAPTER 1: CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND ISRAEL

## INTRODUCTION

The thesis starts with an introduction to the two contexts, in which the study is situated. Both societies, Northern Ireland and Israel are characterised by a legacy of violence and conflict that continues to endure. Identity politics, fuelled by internal and external interests, left their marks on both societies, which share a history of colonialization by European imperial powers (see for example McGarry and O'Leary, 2004; Ruane and Todd, 1996; Yiftachel, 1999). At the centre of the conflict in both societies remain different narratives and claims of ownership of the land, belonging, and self-determination.

Since the definitions of citizenship and citizenship education in each of these societies pose questions related to identity, it is not surprising that citizenship education is a complicated and controversial matter. The purpose of this Chapter is to outline the central issues that emerge in citizenship education in these societies by introducing the reader to the settings, their historical development with a focus on charting the emergence of conflict as well as the development of education systems and citizenship education policies. The Chapter depicts the historical and current role of the education systems and their policies as a response to conflict and identity. It is argued that in both societies identity politics shapes explanations and understandings of the conflict, citizenship and belonging. This has implications of how the conflict is addressed in the political discourse and educational policies. In both countries, separate education systems have developed with the consequence that there is only limited exposure to narratives, identities and views of the other community or/and minorities.

In Northern Ireland, this issue has been partly addressed by contact initiatives, but it is argued that these educational approaches focus on cultural-psychological and ethnic explanations of the conflict. They do not sufficiently address structures of inequality and

sectarianism that have sustained the conflict. In Israel, encounters between Jewish-Israelis and Arab-Palestinians students based on contact theory have been hardly encouraged by official educational policies. Yet, these encounters are criticised on the same grounds by the literature, claiming that they fail to introduce participants to structural explanations of the conflict.

In both countries, the citizenship curricula represent a more structural approach since they provide opportunities to address the political and historical context of the conflict. However, the Chapter concludes by raising concerns that the citizenship curricula in both contexts can provide an educational response to the conflict and the issues that sustain it.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

While the purpose of this thesis is not to discuss and analyse the origins and reasons of the conflict in Northern Ireland, the conflict plays an important part in shaping the understandings of citizenship and identity in post-conflict Northern Ireland. The recent violent political conflict lasted for thirty years, during which about 3,700 people were killed and many more injured. The transition to a more peaceful society was marked by the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, which was negotiated between different political parties as well as the governments of Ireland and the United Kingdom. It succeeded a peace process that began in the early 1990s, accompanied by a ceasefire in 1994. The Agreement defines the constitutional status of citizenship in Northern Ireland, as it states to

> *recognise the birth right of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose, and accordingly confirm that their right to hold both British and Irish citizenship is accepted by both Governments and would not be affected by any future change in the status of Northern Ireland. (The Agreement 1998, Article 1 (4))*

As a consequence, Morrow (2017) has argued that after the Good Friday Agreement citizenship in Northern Ireland offers "national identity as a matter of choice between equals rather than sacred obligation" (p.110), referring to the typical understanding of nationalistic citizenship as an obligation towards the sacred authority of the state and breaking the traditional link between territorial sovereignty and citizenship. Thus, citizenship in Northern Ireland is not linked to the territory itself but rather to a community of choice, which is a result of the historical legacy of the conflict.

There are different perspectives on the causes for the violent conflict: a cultural-psychological or ethnic explanation that focuses on the divisions between Catholic and Protestant communities (Connor, 1994; see Ruane and Todd, 1996; 2005 for more examples) and a structural explanation that focuses on political and economic inequalities as the root of the conflict. Ruane and Todd (1996) argued rightfully that these explanations are interwoven since communal divisions are shaped by actual structural experiences of access to political and economic goods. Yet, without considering the structural dimension of the conflict, the ethnic or cultural-psychological explanation is simplified to an inherent antagonism and "otherness" of Northern Ireland, which the British press described as "an incomprehensible "religious war" between remnant "Catholics and Protestants" (Morrow, 2017:107). Instead, the communal divisions need to be understood against the background of the political context, Britain's imperial interests, and policies as well as Irish resistance and nationalism. Fulton (1991) maintained that whereas the early tensions between the two communities on the island were shaped by economics between dominant feudal lords and the natives, religion became more and more a political force and ideology to justify control and superiority over the other community. The following two sections trace back the development of each community's identity in relation to political and economic interests.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROTESTANT IDENTITY: FROM DOMINATION TO CRISIS?

Ireland was Britain's first colony, stretching back to the reign of Elizabeth I when Britain sought to control the island to serve its imperial and economic interests (Clayton, 1998; Miller, 1998). Part of this control was exercised through the establishment of colonies and

'plantation' on land that was confiscated from the native people on the island (Clayton, 1998), with the goal to outnumber the natives with settlers from England and Scotland, who were loyal to the Crown (Buckland, 1981). As in other colonies, the colonisation of Ireland was justified on grounds of civilising a pagan (although Roman Catholic) and culturally inferior people (Clayton, 1998); refusing to become loyalist Protestants as the Tudors envisioned (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993)[5]. Religion was and would remain an important marker of difference since it was connected to political status on the island (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993).

Protestants from different denominations formed the social, economic and political elite in Ireland until the early 20th century (Buckland, 1981). Increasingly, Protestant religion became associated (although not exclusively) with an elite settler society on the one hand, and Catholic religion with a marginalised native population on the other. During the plantation of Ulster, this settler society adhered to a civic unionism that constructed itself as civilised, liberal and tolerant (Nic Craith, 2003), as "agents of civilization as well as the true Christians" (Fulton, 1991:33). It promoted the idea that the British colonial intervention has brought prosperity and modernity to an economically backward Ulster and claimed that Ireland has benefited in general from this intervention (Buckland, 1981). British identity is seen by unionists[6] as a political identity, threatened in an environment of the cultural particularity of an Irish national state and the possibility of an Irish-nationalist takeover (Nic Craith, 2003). Thus, there was (and remains) a sense of precariousness inherent in this identity, which also explains the opposition of some unionists to the idea of Ireland as a separate historic nation (Buckland, 1981).

With the Home Rule debate, unionists' fear of losing their political power as well as their civil and religious liberties increased (Buckland, 1981). Thus, they raised awareness for a strategic need for unity in terms of political power to control the Catholic minority in

[5] It also needs to be noted that settlements took place long before the 'plantation' of the 17th century, when Scottish and English settlers came to Ireland autonomously (Clayton, 1998; O'Leary and McGarry, 1993).
[6] According to Fulton (1991), it needs to be noted that the Protestant planters were not a cohesive group since they consisted of different religious sects. While these sects had their internal disputes, they were united by their class interest, because the loss of the land to Ireland would have meant the loss of their wealth, freedom of religion and could have been paid with the price of their lives (Fulton, 1991).

Ulster (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993). Since the support from London became increasingly fragile and Home Rule more probable, Protestants realised that they would need to sustain their dominance from within (Fulton, 1991). While the Protestant gentry could identify with the British nation through their class and status, Protestant working classes were increasingly alienated and experienced insecurity in the capitalist system, being left without a strong sense of national identity (Ruane and Todd, 1996). Yet, according to Ruane and Todd (1996), they were integrated through the ideologies of orangeism[7], loyalism and unionism as bearers of identity and religion. Fulton (1991) further outlined that a Protestant culture developed, based on traditional values, annual celebrations that connected past events with contemporary problems (for example through marches) and with the goal to protect the economic interests of the working class, by defending British imperialism.

After partition, the northern state was founded through an alliance between the British imperial interests and Protestant-loyalists, who wanted to preserve their status quo as ruling class and as a religious majority, in the face of being a minority on the island of Ireland (Fulton, 1991). The policies that served to maintain the subordination of the Catholic population were the abolishment of proportional representation in elections, gerrymandering of electoral boundaries, a police force dominated by Protestants from the former Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)[8] and special police powers such as detention without trial (Hewitt, 1981; 1983; O'Hearn, 1983; O'Leary and McGarry, 1993). Through these strategies, the unionist party consolidated its domination and emerged as the central political organisation in the northern state, which was characterised by the institutionalisation of discrimination between Protestants and Catholics in terms of housing, wealth, employment and political opportunities (Fulton, 1991).

[7] Orangeism refers to the political ideology and culture of the orange order, viewed by some Protestants as a unifying guardian of the different Protestant denominations and defending Protestant superiority (McKittrick and McVea, 2012). On the island of Ireland, orangeism is associated with unionism, a political ideology that promotes the union with Britain.
[8] The UVF forms a loyalist paramilitary group that was involved in armed campaigns during "the Troubles". It is named after the former UVF, which was founded in 1912 in opposition to Home rule.

During the peace process in Northern Ireland, the unionist community reacted to the Irish cultural revival movement with their own cultural reflection (McCall, 2002). Unionism has not embraced a form of nationalism, other than their citizenship affiliation with Britain, which connected to an "imagined community" (Anderson, 2006/1983) of Great Britain. Moreover, in the aftermath of the suspension of the Stormont government in 1972[9] and the various agreements between the British and Irish governments, the dissolution of Northern Ireland from the UK became possible, in the case of sufficient democratic support for reunification. Thus, it was seen as vital by many unionists to portray their culture as distinct, to claim recognition for the Ulster-British cultural identity, which rested on the pillars of Britishness, orangeism, and Protestantism (McCall, 2002; Nic Craith 2003; Porter 1998).

For many Protestants, their political identity is expressed through their allegiance to British citizenship (Nic Craith, 2003). Yet, since it is no longer Britain's interest to secure Northern Ireland as part of the union, this association is challenged, leaving Protestant-loyalists in a post-colonial phase, in search for an identity that justifies their past dominance and their belonging in the North (Fulton, 1991).

Related to this, there has been a growing concern about the underachievement of young Protestant men from a working-class background, which has largely been ignored by mainstream unionism (McManus, 2015). Following McManus, the fear that "transformation" could imply "Catholic empowerment" has led unionist leaders to hold on to traditional values, such as loyalty, orangeism and conservative ideals regarding the social order. He claims that this has a negative impact on the educational achievement of Protestant working-class youth. While middle-class Protestants continue to benefit from academic selection and educational achievement has been comparatively more important in Catholic communities, Protestant working-class communities have not witnessed such a trend (McManus, 2015). These communities also continue to be affected by paramilitary violence, since these groups have retained a stronghold in some Protestant, working-class

[9] The government in Stormont was suspended by the British Prime Minister in 1972, who replaced it with direct rule, following the events of Bloody Sunday and increasing violence between the two communities.

areas, where many people feel threatened by the paramilitaries who "police" these neighbourhoods and engage in territorial battles over criminal activities such as drug dealing (Knox, 2002). It is argued that while political leaders generally denounced paramilitary violence, at times they were also ambivalent towards it, exploiting tensions and hostility within the community as a political strategy (Jarman, 2004; Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008). Murtagh (2018) claimed that "ethno-religious differences are also socially constructed, driven by economic-political interests that are expressed through petty ethnocracy, resource competition and formal and informal policing. Some members of the communities also support paramilitaries' punishments as a way of policing, when they do not trust the police to deal with the disorder (Jarman, 2004). According to Jarman, this ambivalence towards violence, practised by the political elite and communities trickles down to the young people from working-class communities, who tend to be either recruited by the paramilitaries or to rebel against them. This achievement gap and disillusionment by the peace process make conflict transformation in these communities a complicated endeavour.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF CATHOLIC IDENTITY: FROM DISCRIMINATION TO RESISTANCE

The land expropriation by the settlers left the Gaelic natives in inferior positions, essentialising their characteristics in terms of land, class, status, and religion. A prominent example of the segregation and oppression of the natives in the settlements are the 'penal laws ', which excluded Catholics from religious, social and political establishments (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993). In the 18$^{th}$ and 19$^{th}$ century, social mobility among Catholics remained blocked by ethno-religious discrimination, yet the Gaelic revival and the grievances of the famine among other reasons contributed to the emergence of Irish nationalism both in a militant and parliamentary form (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993).

As part of the general emergence of nationalism across Europe, a national identity grew also among the lower classes on the island of Ireland through education (Fulton, 1991). Irish nationalism constitutes the Gaelic-Irish people as a nation that is native to the island

of Ireland and it is based on a nationalist-republican[10] and Catholic ideology[11], presenting an ethnocentric view of history and claim to ownership of the island (Fulton, 1991). Irish nationalism developed as a resistance identity under British colonial rule, demanding self-government from Britain and being concerned about the territorial unity of Ireland (Buckland, 1981). While its emergence led in the South to the events of the Easter rising[12] and eventually to the Irish war of independence and the partition of the island, it established the Catholic population in the North as a national minority under the rule of the Protestant-loyalists (Fulton, 1991). The government in Northern Ireland ruled autonomously over law and order, as the Irish Free State was excluded and the British withdrew their power deliberatively because it would serve them to blank out the Irish question from their own politics in Westminster (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993). The legitimacy of the state remained one-sided and constituted itself on the premise of Protestant majority rule as a form of hegemonic control (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993), underpinned by policies which discriminated directly and indirectly against Catholics in realms of housing, employment, political rights and representation as well as the treatment by an exclusively Protestant police force (Darby, 1995; McKittrick and McVea, 2012). Thus, the nationalist movement kept their focus on injustice, although the commitment to cultural nationalism and Irishness associated with the Irish reunification of the Irish nation remained a central aspect. Republicans, however, concentrated on the reunification and highlighted the importance of territory for the Irish nation and the connection to the land (Nic Craith, 2003).

In their resistance, Catholics hoped for a collapse of the dominance of the unionists in Northern Ireland, boycotting its institutions and its leaders (Buckland, 1981). Yet, their

[10] Republican nationalism refers to the political ideology of forming a republican nation-state as a political entity that is ruled by its citizens through popular sovereignty. This means in the case of Ireland rule by its citizens as opposed to British rule (see for example Ward, 2015).

[11] Fulton (1991) has argued that the Catholic or religious aspect of this identity has remained dominant, due to the historical links between religion and politics, which have influenced political Catholicism as well as Protestantism on the island of Ireland. During times of oppression in Ireland, the church often provided the only refuge for Catholics from lower classes, as well as a sense of identity and a form of "spiritual leadership" (Fulton, 1991:113).

[12] The events of the Easter rising in 1916 marked an uprising against British rule in Ireland, becoming the first stage of the war of independence, which eventually led to the partition of the island of Ireland in 1921.

political marginalisation left them without means of appeal against discrimination within the political institutions (McKittrick and McVea, 2012). Catholic resistance took different forms, with the Catholic working-class developing an increasing political awareness in the face of violent clashes accompanied by political demonstrations (Buckland, 1981). Furthermore, the civil rights movement, spearheaded by the Catholic middle-class and students developed the slogan of "equal citizenship", inspired by the rhetoric of other civil rights movements (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993). While the Social, Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) rejected the notion of an exclusive identity for a nation and demanded recognition of the Irish national identity by the British state, Republicans conceptualised nationalism through notions of ethnicity and formed their response to the inequalities in the north as part of the strategy of reunification (Nic Craith, 2003). Additionally, some republicans, such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA [13]) saw reunification achieved through violent means (Nic Craith, 2003); justified as a legitimate war against an oppressor, partly portraying Protestant-loyalists as "foreigners with an alien culture, and as either a pariah group - the mere instrument of British imperialism – or simply not there. Their culture as no rights and no claim to an alternative identity." (Fulton, 1991:104).

During the peace process and political transformations, the Catholic community largely embraced political developments and cultural revival as a means of detaching itself from the stigma of an oppressed minority (Nic Craith, 2003). Even predating the agreement, Catholics have benefitted from the reforms that were introduced under the pressure from the Republic of Ireland and the United States, which allowed them to manifest a better political and socio-economic position (Ruane and Todd, 1996). Due to the difficulties in finding employment, many young Catholics have strived towards higher education as a route out of poverty (Breen, 2001; McManus, 2015). Similar to the loyalist paramilitaries, republican paramilitaries continue to police certain working-class neighbourhoods in Belfast, controlling "anti-social behaviour" of young people, who are involved in criminal

[13] The Irish Republican Army or the Provisional Irish Republican Army is an armed movement that set at its goals the end of British rule on the island of Ireland, to establish an Irish republic and finally the reunification of Ireland.

activities such as car theft, joyriding, vandalising etc., which is discounted by the IRA as a distraction from the "republican struggle" (Knox, 2002: 176). Knox noted that on both sides, paramilitaries take on the role of an alternative justice system, switching between the role of 'protector' and 'oppressor'. It is argued that this toleration of low-level violence is part of the political responses to the conflict (Jarman, 2004; 2016; Knox, 2002). The next section outlines these political responses, such as the community relations approach (McEvoy et al., 2006), which has influenced the current position of Catholics and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland.

## POLICY RESPONSES TO THE CONFLICT: PEACE AT WHAT PRICE?

Efforts to improve the relationship between the two communities in Northern Ireland were already initiated during the outbreak of the recent violent conflict. In 1969, the Community Relations Act was launched, promoting an agenda based on the paradigm of 'community relations' inspired by existing policies in Britain on racial disharmony (Frazer and Fitzduff, 1994). The community relations policy in Northern Ireland referred to the aims of increasing contact between Catholics and Protestants, ensuring equal treatment and opportunities, promoting mutual understanding and respect for different cultures and traditions (Hughes and Donnelly, 2004). McVeigh (2002) criticised the community relations approach because it fosters the notion that the conflict emerged between two rival communities, constructs symmetry between the Protestant and Catholic violence and portrays the Northern Irish state as a neutral arbiter, ignoring its role during the conflict. McEvoy et al. (2006) explained that community relations policies focused on improving contact and tolerance between the two communities but did not address equality reforms and persistent human rights issues. Policies of normalisation, criminalisation, and ulsterisation[14] directed the focus towards social and economic issues, glossing over the

[14] Ulsterisation refers to one aspect of the three-part policy of normalisation and criminalisation on part of the British government during "the Troubles". Ulsterisation implied the devolution of security and policy to local forces such as the local Royal Ulster Constabulary or Ulster Defence Regiment and to increasingly disengage the British army from Northern Ireland (Flackes and Elliott, 1989).

political character of the paramilitary activities by concentrating on the nature of their activities as criminal (McEvoy et al., 2006).

A similar agenda was promoted through the Anglo-Irish agreement, signed in 1985 between the Irish and the British government, establishing a blurry commitment to reconciliation and to achieve peace by renouncing violence (Morrow, 2017). Morrow pointed out that the concept of reconciliation, imposed by the Irish and British government also meant a denationalisation of the conflict by backgrounding the unresolved political issues related to the national identity of the country. Thus, these critical political issues also remained the most contentious during the negotiations of the 1998 agreement, referring to the disarmament of paramilitary organisations, the release of political prisoners, policing and the acknowledgement of the victims (Morrow, 2017). McEvoy et al. (2006) argued that reconciliation has been successful in a sense that it has reduced the level of violence, but it has become synonymous with the term of 'community relations'. According to McEvoy et al., the promotion of "reconciliation" was also shaped by the intent of the British government and liberal unionists to gain support from more moderate Catholic-nationalists by marginalising support for more extreme republicans such as the IRA.

In the peace negotiations, the British government presented itself as an "honest broker" (p.184) and saw its main strategy as encouraging the rival communities to cooperate, which also later generated international acceptance of the British intervention (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993). Yet, O'Leary and McGarry (1993) maintained that Britain's self-proclaimed neutrality is questioned by the involvement of the British Army in the events of 'Bloody Sunday,' the internment policies and the Hunger Strikes, as the security measures were mainly directed towards the Irish minority, which protested against British rule. For both the British and Irish government, the reconciliation rhetoric provided a comfortable position since it located the problem inside of Northern Ireland and independent from their own position and past involvement (Morrow, 2017).

Related to this policy response in narrowing the causes of the divisions between the communities to sectarianism and individual prejudice (McEvoy et al., 2006), the colonial

legacy is often omitted in academic representations of Northern Ireland, portraying the conflict as ethnic, and Northern Ireland as uncivilised and backward (Miller, 1998). This focus on identity politics has served to mask the responsibility of the state, both in Britain and Northern Ireland for acts of violence and oppression (McEvoy et al., 2006; McVeigh, 2002; Miller, 1998).

Thus, three elements dominate political responses to the conflict in Northern Ireland: first, the promotion of the image of Britain as a 'neutral' actor hides its past colonial interests and involvement in violence and oppression (McVeigh, 2002; Miller, 1998). Second, by ignoring the historical power asymmetry between the two communities in Northern Ireland, it delegitimises to an extent the claims to equality by the Catholic community, whose history of oppression is not adequately thematised (McVeigh, 2002). Consequently, locating the conflict within the paradigm of community divisions and reconciliation glosses over its political character (McEvoy et al., 2006). Morrow (2017) stated that the political parties, which represent both communities in Northern Ireland, are appealing to "particular narratives of crime and heroism" (p.116), creating a "moral economy" (p.116) for themselves, which they are afraid of losing in the face of legal processes and investigations or future truth commissions. Third, instead of supporting a real investigation of the past, dealing with unresolved issues and questions of guilt and victimhood, the political elite in Northern Ireland seems to prefer reproducing a "culture of accusation and counteraccusation" (Morrow, 2017:116).

The history of Northern Ireland exemplifies that identity formations cannot be discussed without their connection to power. Analysing these identities apart from the context of power relations, as it is done by the ethnic-conflict paradigm (see Miller, 1998 for critique), also essentialises identities. For example, it distracts from the fact that the oppression of the Catholic population was facilitated through a repressive state apparatus, by problematising Protestant and unionist culture itself (McEvoy et al., 2006). Framing oppositional national identities in Northern Ireland as the root cause has led to a certain unease, "an implicit antipathy towards expressions of identity" (p.94), as they became associated with sectarianism and extremism (McEvoy et al., 2006). However, while the

reasons for the conflict are certainly not rooted in the notion of "national identities" themselves, identities are highly politicised in Northern Ireland, as religious, educational and political establishments draw on identities and cultures to promote political interests in Northern Ireland (Fulton, 1991). For example, political Protestant-loyalism in Ulster has been shaped by a popular belief in the right to violence in order to assert the right to autonomy in political and religious terms and "taking the law into their own hands" (Fulton, 1991:107). Similarly, some Irish Catholics defend the use of violence based on "a just war against an oppressor" (p.129) through national liberation. Thus, while these different political ideologies in Northern Ireland are connected to religion, which also promotes non-violence, they can also be used to justify the use of violence. Yet, even though these identities have sometimes been framed as the core issue in the community relations and reconciliation paradigm, they are more accurately viewed as a political instrument for the masses.

At the beginning of the Chapter, it was stated that citizenship in Northern Ireland is linked to the community of choice, which is a result of the legacy of the conflict and the subsequent peace negotiations. The recognition of both Irish and British citizenship grants legitimacy to both communities' narratives. The next section will introduce the reader to the education system and how the political responses to the conflict have shaped educational policies and citizenship education.

## EDUCATION AND THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

This section looks at the education system, educational policies and the citizenship curriculum in Northern Ireland. It outlines how the cultural-psychological explanation of the conflict presented in the last section has mostly dominated educational policies and approaches to address the conflict in schools (McEvoy, 2007). Yet, despite its limitations resulting from the gap between rhetoric and reality (McEvoy, 2007), the citizenship curriculum has been the most promising educational response to conflict transformation in Northern Ireland as it was initially based on structural explanations of the conflict which go beyond the community relations paradigm. The section starts with sketching briefly

the historical development of the education system in Northern Ireland and then outlines educational responses to conflict and their criticism. An overview of the historical development of the education system has the purpose to demonstrate how educational policies, including the citizenship curriculum, have been influenced by political interests.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Whereas traditionally the churches largely administered education on the island of Ireland, in 1831 a national system of education was introduced, in co-existence with an intermediate, technical and private system (Dunn, 1990; McEwen and Salters, 1993). National education in colonial Ireland was characterised by processes of Anglicisation, where the British Empire sought to assert its dominance through English language education, imposing its understanding of 'civilisation' and providing the means for citizenship within the British Empire (Nic Craith, 2003:103).

After partition, the new Ministry of Education in Northern Ireland established a committee, known as the 'Lynn Committee'[15] to report on the future of Northern Ireland's education system. This Committee proposed an education system modelled on existing systems in England and Wales and was not sympathetic to the Irish culture (Dunn, 1990). Essentially, the education system envisioned was to be underpinned by a British culture:

> *This culture was perceived in political terms, and it was obvious that the curriculum would be British in its cultural emphases, rather than Irish or bicultural (Dunn, 1990:58).*

Lynn's Report informed the 1923 Education Act, which set as its goal to create a national education system. To achieve this, it planned to transfer gradually all primary schools under the control of the state, creating three different school types, which differed in the allocation of funding and level of control by the local authorities. This differentiation was based on the idea that the more control was transferred to the local authorities over the

[15] It is important to note that the committee was dominated by Protestant and unionist representatives and only one Catholic representative, as the Catholic Church refused to be involved in the committee because it opposed many of its fundamental ideas.

school, the more funding would be granted to the school type (Akenson, 1973; Dunn, 1990). The 1930 Education Act further manifested the separation between the different school types as it accommodated the claims by the Protestant clergy for religious instruction in Protestant (controlled) schools and by restoring 50 percent funding to the Catholic (voluntary) schools, which addressed the claims by the Catholic clergy to retain clerical authority over their schools (McGrath, 2000). While 'controlled' and 'transferred' were not designated as Protestant schools in legal terms and 'voluntary' schools were not defined as Catholic schools, it was presumed by the Committee that Protestants would attend schools fully funded by the State and Catholics would attend schools that received only a proportion of state funding[16] (Dunn, 1990; McEwen and Salters, 1993).

Although a long-term struggle for equal funding and resource allocation would follow (Dunn and Morgan, 1999), the Catholic community in Northern Ireland, together with the Catholic Church managed to preserve a degree of autonomy in the field of education to preserve its own identity (Murray, 1985). Managed by the church and funded mainly by the Northern Irish government, the Catholic community developed its own scouting organisations, sport and social clubs, which promoted and preserved Irish culture outside of the schools (Fulton, 1991). McGrath (2000) argued that the upholding of autonomy for Catholic schools has been vital in preserving the Catholic community's identity in terms of religion and Gaelic culture. Yet, keeping the autonomy and retaining a specifically Catholic ethos, clerical control over the schools has also meant to pay the price for unequal funding. Historically, the two communities' identification with the state and its institutions has been different among Protestants and Catholics, since the latter tended to be suspicious

[16] In the remainder of the thesis I will use the terms of Catholic and Protestant schools, since this is how the schools are perceived mainly regarding their background. In his qualitative study of the culture in separate schools, Murray (1985) found that the emphasis on Catholicism in Catholic schools was mainly a political statement, as this allies them with nationalism and in a wider sense with Catholic Ireland. Thus, the Protestants in his study perceived the Catholic symbols, rituals and other expressions of identity in Catholic schools as political. In contrast, in state controlled schools, Murray discovered that although these schools claim to avoid being seen as exclusively Protestant, they nonetheless reflect and reinforce values and attitudes of unionist culture. For example, he explained how Protestant staff at the school perceived the Union Jack, which was installed in front of the school as "neutral" and natural since they argued that a state school located in the UK would showcase the emblem of the state. Yet, for Catholics the Union Jack is equated with Britishness and thus Protestantism and as result they perceive this school as Protestant (Murray, 1985).

and resentful towards the Northern Ireland government, which did not value their identities and political aspirations (Murray, 1985). Consequently, Murray (1985) described in his study that the Protestant school fostered close relationships and a positive attitude towards the Department of Education (DE), whereas the Catholic school perceived the Department less as a support system, but rather as an outsider or opposition and resented its interference in the affairs of the school.

However, since 1993 Catholic and Protestant schools in Northern Ireland are equally funded by the state, signalling a better relationship between the church and the state. The 1993 order eliminated the voluntary contribution, while some Protestant and Catholic post-primary selective schools contribute 15 percent funding in return for some independence (McGrath, 2000). As part of the 1993 order there was a Schedule 1 agreement between the Church and the Department of Education that in return for a governor nominated by the DE on their board, the Church would receive 100 percent funding for Catholic schools in the primary and non-selective post-primary sector.

The separate school system continues to exist in Northern Ireland, securing each communities' and clergy's control over their schools through separate management boards[17].

The Good Friday Agreement included a range of rights or protections that relate to collective rights, such as the insurance of proportionality in political representation, the protection from discrimination in employment, the right to hold either Irish or British citizenship, and the recognition of the importance of minority languages and cultures (Gilbert et al., 1998; Jenkins, 2006). Based on the latter, the Agreement has further facilitated the increase in integrated and Irish-medium schools, as the respective political parties have committed themselves to encourage and facilitate these forms of education (Northern Ireland office, 1998). The first Irish-medium school was already established in 1971, despite reservations by the government, which opposed exclusive instruction in

[17] The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) is the managing and employing authority for non-selective primary and post-primary Catholic schools, while Protestant schools are managed by the Education Authority. Representatives from Transferors Representative Council (TRC) are nominated for the Boards of Governors of the Education Authority.

Irish and having to compensate for its own funding. In 1983, the DE started to allocate grant-aid status to Irish-medium schools (O'Coinn, 2006). Since then the number of schools has increased to 29 and a recent review of the state of Irish-medium education has recommended to continue developing Irish-medium post-primary education, which has been accepted and endorsed by policymakers (DE, 2014).

The movement "All children together" emerged initially as a parental initiative with a vision of mixed-schooling (Dunn, 1990). The initiative opened the first integrated school, Lagan College in 1981 itself (Dunn, 1990; Dunn and Morgan, 1999). In 1989, integrated schooling [18] was officially recognised [19] and a legal duty was placed on the DE to encourage and facilitate the opening of integrated schools, to encourage their establishment through funding and, to help existing schools to transfer to integrated status (Dunn and Morgan, 1999). Nevertheless, the integrated sector educates only a small proportion of children in Northern Ireland's education system: by and large, Catholics attend Catholic-maintained schools, managed by the Catholic Church and Protestants attend state-controlled schools, apart from a small integrated sector that caters for five to 10 percent of the population (DE, 2013/2014).

## EDUCATION POLICY RESPONSES TO THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In the section about the historical development of the conflict it was claimed that there are two different kinds of explanations of the conflict, a cultural-psychological or ethnic explanation, and a structural explanation (see page 14; Ruane and Todd, 1996). It will be argued that some educational responses such as contact initiatives, integrated schools, and

[18] The criteria for integrated schools in terms of religious balance are that they must attract eventually 30 per cent of the students from the minority community (Protestant or Catholic) in the respective area (DE, 2018).

[19] The movement was successful in pressuring to pass an amendment of the 1972 Education and Library Board Order to allow a new school type of 'Controlled Integrated Schools'. However, due to the lack of action on the side of the state, they were forced to open the first integrated school themselves funded by charities, foundations and individuals (Dunn, 1990; Dunn and Morgan, 1999).

Shared Education are based on a conceptualisation of the conflict that is weighted towards viewing sectarianism primarily as a result of the lack of contact between the two communities and individual prejudice. In contrast, curricular initiatives such as Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) and Local and Global Citizenship (LGC) intended to provide a more structural explanation of the conflict, by embedding the conflict and sectarianism in its politico-historical context and providing young people with a better understanding of the conflict and the 'other' community. Yet, it will also be argued that there is a danger that these educational responses are diluted, leaving schools and teachers at liberty to address controversial but important aspects of the conflict and sectarianism (McEvoy, 2007).

## CONTACT INITIATIVES, INTEGRATED SCHOOLS, AND SHARED EDUCATION

The separated nature of the education system raised concerns about the lack of contact between the different communities and influenced the emergence of inter-group initiatives that sought to facilitate contact between Protestant and Catholic children and young people (Dunn and Morgan, 1999). Contact initiatives emerged in the 1970s and were influenced by the theoretical debates on the 'contact hypothesis' (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998), undertaken by non-state actors until they were institutionalised through the Schools Community Relations Programme (SCRP), funded by the Department of Education (Arlow, 2002). Even though researchers found generally a positive impact of these initiatives, they argued that the term community relations remained vague to most pupils and perceived the programme as being mainly about school trips (O'Connor et al., 2003).

Both types of initiatives, contact schemes between different schools and integrated schooling, were later recognised through the 1989 Education Order (Dunn and Morgan, 1999). The debate between the proponents of integrated education, who demand that the state should invest in integrated schooling and those in favour of contact schemes between separate schools in the form of shared education remained (Smith, 2014). Recently, the attention of policymakers has shifted towards shared education (Hughes, 2014). In 2015,

the Department of Education introduced a policy for shared education[20], which passed legislation in 2016, providing a statutory definition of 'Shared education'[21]. The purpose of Shared Education is "to deliver educational benefits to children and young persons; to promote the efficient and effective use of resources; to promote equality of opportunity; to promote good relations; and to promote respect of identity, diversity and community cohesion." (NI assembly, 2016:1). It is argued that Shared Education can facilitate relationship building and collaboration between schools and teachers that allows the sharing of resources and addresses to some extent the separate nature of education in Northern Ireland (Gallagher, 2016; Loader and Hughes, 2017). However, research by Loader and Hughes (2017) on existing shared education initiatives demonstrated that more controversial issues related to discrimination and conflict tend to be avoided for the sake of keeping the "fragile harmony" (p.128).

Since the 1970s debates around whether the separate school system has contributed to a misunderstanding between the communities and reinforced community divisions (Dunn and Smith, 1995) have gained momentum. Yet, in-depth research has demonstrated that issues around identity and difference are rarely discussed in integrated schools (Donnelly, 2004a; 2004b; 2008; Donnelly and Hughes, 2006). Donnelly's research documents a culture of sidestepping or silence in integrated schools, where teachers are reluctant to address controversial issues about identity and focus on preserving a harmonious environment. She argued that apparent harmonious relationships between different groups in integrated schools are uncritically taken as evidence that these schools promote tolerance and mutual understanding. Thus, the educational approaches presented in this section do not provide a structural explanation or response to the conflict, since they focus on inter-group contact and individual prejudice. Instead, drawing on Donnelly's research,

[20] The 'Shared education signature project' with the purpose of bringing different schools together runs until 2019 and is funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies.

[21] The policy addresses "those of different religious belief, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons; and those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not" (NI Assembly, 2016), thus cutting across the religious as well as the class divide in Northern Ireland.

there is a danger that these intergroup encounters and settings are dominated by a culture of avoidance that is accepted.

## CURRICULAR RESPONSES: EDUCATION FOR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND LOCAL AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

A different type of educational initiative emerged also at the height of the conflict, which provided a structural response as it facilitates political discussions about the conflict in schools. Initially, and despite the responsibility of the Department of Education, curricular initiatives were mainly developed by individual practitioners during the 1970s, supported by higher education, individual schools or voluntary organisations (Emerson and McCully, 2014). As Emerson and McCully maintain, the Department of Education was sceptical about early initiatives, including the Northern Ireland Schools Curriculum Project (Crone and Malone, 1979) and the Schools Cultural Studies Project (Robinson, 1981). Murray (1985) found that this project, which encouraged students to clarify cultural and social values instead of taking them as static and unalterable was rather embraced by Catholic than Protestant schools. Catholic schools were more open to question dominant societal values and norms, whereas Protestant schools saw this as an attack on the status quo and the dominant Protestant position and thus tended to oppose or ignore this project (Murray, 1985).

In 1989, two cross-curricular themes, Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) and Cultural Heritage (CH), which were intended to foster "the improvement of relations between the two communities" (p.3), became part of the common curriculum within the 1989 Education Order (Smith and Robinson, 1992). Initially, there was suspicion around EMU among both communities that it presented a form of "social engineering driven by a desire to dilute cultural identity." (Arlow, 2004:280). Officially, EMU and CH consisted of building respect and relationships with others, understanding the conflict and culture in Northern Ireland (Arlow, 2004).

EMU was criticised on various grounds. Besides problems with implementation, a review of EMU found that there was a lack of clarity in terms of what EMU was about and there was a wide perception among schools that EMU was mainly about contact (Smith and Robinson, 1992). McEvoy and Lundy (2007) argued that the initiative did not address the political nature of the conflict and failed to engage with issues of human rights and equality. Finally, Emerson and McCully (2014) contend that the statutory establishment of curricular initiatives was problematic mainly because they lost their "hard edged practice" (p.9) and thus their impact was diluted in a way that reference to social injustices were largely avoided by teachers (Smith and Robinson, 1996). Whereas EMU is seen as offering a strategy for addressing individual prejudice, it did not develop ways for young people to critically examine issues of justice and discrimination at a structural level (McEvoy, 2007).

The political transformations in Northern Ireland and evolving citizenship education policies in other countries, such as the Crick Report in the UK, created an environment where the development of citizenship education was reconsidered. The Council for Curriculum Examination and Assessment (CCEA) started to review the existing curriculum and proposed that a new citizenship curriculum should be developed as a contribution to the peace process, which was also driven by EU and US initiatives to further advance citizenship education (Emerson and McCully, 2014). Various research projects have been conducted, mainly by CCEA, which suggested the development of a specific programme for citizenship education and proposed among other values "equality, justice, and human rights within our society and our capacity as citizens to resolve conflict by democratic means" (CCEA, 2000b:4). After pilot work on citizenship education in 1998 and 1999, the Department of Education introduced 'Local and Global Citizenship' (LGC) in all post-primary schools on a phased basis for all young people in Northern Ireland (DE, 2005) and it became a core statutory element of the Northern Ireland curriculum.

In contrast to EMU, which was criticised because it lacked a structural response to discrimination and prejudice (McEvoy, 2007), LGC addresses aspects such as equality,

social justice, and human rights. Furthermore, it also seeks to "strengthen young people's social, civic and political awareness." (CCEA, 2007:15). It consists of four major themes: 'Diversity and Inclusion', where young people explore diversity in a local and global context; 'Equality and Justice', which directly addresses issues of discrimination and inequality based on group identity; 'Democracy and Active Participation', which is about structural aspects of democracy and active participation; and finally 'Human Rights and Social Responsibility', where young people not only learn about the legislation but also how to balance clashes of rights in diverse societies (CCEA, 2015).

Although McEvoy (2007) recognised the acknowledgement of a structural response within the LGC policy text, she raised three concerns: first, the academic representation of the curriculum as a successor of EMU; this blurs the fact that LGC goes beyond the promotion of community relations and tolerance. Second, a concern is raised that LGC does not sufficiently mandate teachers to address the violence and injustices of the past and does not provide opportunities for young people to engage with different narratives. McEvoy argued that there is a need to provide teachers with support and a framework to address the local conflict on an individual and structural level. While an initial extensive teacher training was provided that increased teachers' confidence to deal with controversial issues and to introduce active learning methods (Niens and O'Connor, 2006), at the time of writing training in these areas was not offered. Third, McEvoy highlighted the shortcomings of its approach to human rights education, which does not address the dimension of state accountability and responsibility, reinforcing her concern that issues of state accountability will be diluted and reframed in terms of individual responsibility.

## SUMMARY

Connecting this section about education to the one above about citizenship and identity politics in Northern Ireland, it becomes apparent that structures of inequality and sectarianism that have long fuelled the conflict between the two communities have not

been sufficiently challenged, neither in the dominant political discourse nor in the educational policies. Yet, the Catholic community in Northern Ireland has also benefitted from policies and reforms as a result of the increasing commitment to promoting equality between the communities. Educational responses to the conflict have been informed by both cultural-psychological and structural explanations of the conflict. The former avoids providing a broader politico-historical understanding of the conflict from the outset and focuses on individual prejudice rather than social, political and economic structures of power as explanations for sectarianism and conflict. However, structural educational responses to the conflict such as LGC are also at risk of being depoliticised, since any notions of accountability and responsibility are absent from the citizenship curriculum (McEvoy, 2007).

## ISRAEL

### THE CONFLICT IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

While the peace process in Northern Ireland remains fragile, it is non- existent in Israel at the time of writing. Negotiations between the Israeli and the Palestinian leadership remain difficult and the atmosphere is generally tense, characterised by regular outbreaks of violence such as the recent events in Gaza or around the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem[22] and frequent deathly attacks by individuals from both sides, targeting military, police personnel and civilians.

Like Northern Ireland, Israel and Palestine are scarred by a long history of political conflict. Crimes that were committed in the past have not been accounted for and the political leaders and groups have not taken responsibility for their actions, making conflict transformation a difficult mission (see for example Rogan and Shlaim, 2007). The current conflict is fuelled by unresolved political issues such as the military occupation, the missing recognition of Israel's statehood, the imposition of a diplomatic and economic

[22] The most recent examples are the protests in Gaza, which started in March 2018 (Al-Mughrabi, 2018) and the events around the access and security control relating to the Al-Aqsa mosque in July 2017 (Berger, 2017).

boycott by some states, the status of the Palestinian refugees, the status of Jerusalem and the question of Palestinian statehood. Again, being constrained by limited space, I will briefly sketch the emergence of Zionism and Palestinian nationalism as the main political movements that shaped the conflict.

The history of the land, which was later divided in the State of Israel and the occupied Palestinian Territories, is subject to different narratives by Palestinians and Israelis. Both claim priority status to justify a control of the land: whereas Palestinians emphasise their continuous residence and cultivation of the land, which was only disrupted by recent developments of flight, expulsion, and dispossession; Israelis claim a continuous spiritual connection to the land traced back to the biblical Hebrew kingdoms in addition to the fact that a Jewish minority has also continuously inhabited the land (Yiftachel, 2006). Influenced and inspired by modern nationalist movements in other parts of the world, the land became increasingly part of both Palestinian and Jewish imaginations of their designated national home and both nations base their political rights on a national narrative of belonging (Gelvin, 2014).

The land that consists today of the State of Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip carried historically different names such as Canaan, Kingdom of Israel and Judea and, Palestine, ruled by various empires such as the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek and, Roman Empire. More recently, it was part of the Ottoman Empire for four hundred years until its defeat and then captured by British troops in 1917, which ruled the territory as a mandate that they received from the United Nations until 1948 (Norris, 2013; Yiftachel, 2006).

Jewish immigration to Palestine is commonly summarised in four waves of immigration from 1882 until approximately 1939, called aliyot[23] (Gelvin, 2014; Kimmerling, 1995). Whilst the waves of Jewish immigration differ in terms of the origins of the immigrants and their ideological motivation, they were largely triggered by the political conditions in

[23] Plural of 'aliyah' meaning in Hebrew 'to ascend', which is a common term to describe Jewish immigration to Israel as "to ascend from their diaspora condition and be reborn in Palestine" (Gelvin, 2014:56).

Europe, Russia and other parts of the world where the Jewish minority was persecuted and discriminated against (Gelvin, 2014; Harms and Ferry, 2008).

The Balfour declaration, issued by the British Foreign Office in 1917 maintained British support for a Jewish national homeland (Norris, 2013). Yet, at the same time, British representatives also made commitments to the establishment of an Arab state in the region (Yiftachel, 2006). Following increasing tensions and the outbreak of the Great Revolt in 1936, the British Royal Commission of Inquiry headed by Lord Peel concluded that the mandate had become unworkable suggested a partition of the territory into a Jewish and an Arab state (Shahak, 1989). However, the plan's realisation proved to be difficult in the face of "political, administrative and financial difficulties" (UK government, 1937). The British, the Zionist movements and, parts of the indigenous population organised and armed themselves during this time and all engaged in acts of violence, retaliation, and counter-retaliation (Gelvin, 2014). The reasons for the escalation of violence are complex. It was fuelled by fears of a Zionist-Jewish takeover and resistance towards the British administration among the Arab population while the Jewish population sought to guard its settlements, pressure the British to allow Jewish immigration to Palestine during the Holocaust and further its aspirations to establish a Jewish state (Gelvin, 2014). Yet, Gelvin (2014) noted that the roots of the revolt can also be attributed to economic peripheralization and growing impoverishment of the local native population.

In 1947, Britain signalled its intention to terminate its mandate and the United Nations' General Assembly proposed a partition plan[24], splitting the territory in a Jewish state (about 56 percent of the territory) and an Arab state (about 44 percent of the territory), leaving the city of Jerusalem under international control (UN, 1947). The plan was accepted by the Jewish leaders but rejected by Palestinian leaders and the Arab states, which led to the outbreak of a civil war (Yiftachel, 2006). There are different perspectives about the events that led to the outcomes of the 1948 war. Some authors emphasised the unequal socio-economic political positioning of the Yishuv (the pre-state Jewish

[24] The UN partition plan suggested allocating 56 per cent of the land to the Jewish people and 44 per cent to the Arab population.

community in the Mandate) vis-à-vis the local population that gave the former an advantage during the war (Khalidi, 2006). Others emphasised that despite support by neighbouring Arab countries and Britain the local Arab population decided to flee or was driven into neighbouring countries in the face of overwhelming military power and skill on part of the Zionists (Oren, 2002).

The war[25] ended, one year later with the defeat of the Palestinian and Arab forces and the declaration of the State of Israel, remembered by Israelis as "the Independence Day" (*yom ha'atzmaut*) and among Palestinians and Arabs as "the catastrophe" (*al-nakba*) (Oren, 2002). While the Jewish population established its new state, Palestine would cease to exist as one political entity, leaving 500,000 to one million Palestinians as refugees (Kimmerling and Migdal 2003); and over 400 villages completely destroyed (Davis and Coffman, 2014). The situation has not been resolved at the interim period, followed by wars in 1956, 1967, 1973 and 1982, the Palestinian uprisings (*Intifada*) in 1987 and 2000, the recent conflicts in Gaza in 2008 and 2014. The Six Day War in 1967 between Israel, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan was particularly significant since Israel gained control over territories that were previously under control of Arab states such as the Sinai Peninsula[26], Golan Heights, West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

Regular eruptions of violence have been accompanied by peace negotiation efforts. The most prominent example are the Oslo accords, which were also the first face-to-face negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. They were triggered by a favourable political environment at the end of the Cold War and on both sides for negotiations: in Israel, the election of Rabin as prime minister in 1992 represented a shift away from the uncompromising policies in the occupied territories by previous governments, which were viewed by many Israelis as a "stumbling block against Israel's full integration into regional and world communities" (Gelvin, 2014:233). Gelvin (2014) outlined that the

[25] The number of victims of the war, like the war itself is contested. According to Morris (2008), the Jewish side has lost between 5,700-5,800 people with a quarter of them civilians, representing about 1 per cent of its population. Morris notes that the number of losses on the Palestinian side is unclear but estimated to be slightly higher.

[26] As part of the Camp David Accords in 1978 between Israel and Egypt, Israel withdrew its troops from the Sinai Peninsula.

PLO was at that time exiled in Tunis and lost its most important ally, the Soviet Union. It sought to regain strength by reinstating its status as the main representative of the Palestinian people, which was threatened by other competing groups (Gelvin, 2014; Harms and Ferry, 2008). At the beginning, about 65 percent of the population on both sides was in favour of the Oslo accords, which did not actually lead to any agreement or settlement but only a commitment that future negotiations will take place and that a Palestinian authority will be established, outlining its powers and duties (Gelvin, 2014; Harms and Ferry, 2008). The enthusiasm for the negotiations diminished over time on both sides and they were resisted by other political groups like the Likud party (the Likud-National Liberal Movement), Gush Emunim[27], Hamas and Palestinian rejectionists. The assassination of Rabin in 1995, the election of a new government under Netanyahu that resisted making concessions and the increasing disillusionment among Palestinians due to the incompetence and corruption on part of the PLO led to a decline of the willingness among both sides to negotiate over time, while the frustration among the populations increased also in the face of violence (Gelvin, 2014).

## THE EMERGENCE OF ZIONISM

Jews have always expressed a longing for Jerusalem and an attachment to the land of Israel for centuries through religious practice (Brenner, 2002). The connection between Judaism and the geographical place of Jerusalem and Israel was understood mainly as a spiritual connection (Avineri, 2017), but at the end of the 19$^{th}$-century projects for a Jewish state started to appear (Brenner, 2002). Avineri (2017) argued that whereas the most common explanation of why Zionism emerged at that time is often attributed to the outbreak of anti-Semitism and the persecution of Jews throughout Europe, an additional

[27] Gush Emunim was a national-religious activist movement advocating as its main cause to establish settlements in the occupied territories. While the movement no longer exists, it remains active in political circles.

explanation is that it developed in a particular political environment of emerging nationalisms across Europe[28].

Among these emerging projects for a Jewish state, the one formulated by Theodor Herzl was the most popular one, who is often quoted as the founder of political Zionism. Herzl (1934/1896) argued that since European Jews have long suffered from marginalisation and persecution in Europe that the 'Jewish question' is, in fact, a national one and can only be solved through the emancipation of the Jewish people as a nation. Among other places, he envisaged a future Jewish state in the land of Palestine as the historical homeland of the Jewish people and sought to create a common secular national identity. The Zionist pioneers with their ideological commitment to creating a revolutionary national Jewish society started to cultivate the land in Palestine (Kimmerling and Migdal, 2003; Swirski, 1999). The Zionist strategy was territorial: purchasing land and attracting immigrants to create a viable socio-economic environment for a Jewish political sovereignty (Yiftachel, 2006).

Different forms of Zionism emerged simultaneously while parts of the Jewish population also defined themselves as anti- or non-Zionist (Gelvin, 2014). The major Zionist streams were labour Zionism that envisioned a socialist, collectivist, egalitarian and Hebrew-speaking society (Davis and Coffman, 2014), revisionist Zionism as a more militant form that included the formation of paramilitary organisations such as the *Haganah* (Hebrew Defense Organisation)[29] and finally religious Zionism, which defines the Torah as the basis of Jewish nationalism (Schwartz, 2002). Whilst these descriptions are simplistic

[28] With the French Revolution, the rise of secularism, modernism, liberalism and nationalism, new questions about belonging, inclusion and exclusion, emancipation and assimilation arose (see Avineri, 2017). As Avineri (2017) notes importantly, these theories were often connected to racism and cultural determinism. Thus, while they promote a language of freedom, liberation and community, the rhetoric of nationalism excluded minorities such as the Jews in Europe, by defining in racist terms what it means to be a "real" German, French or Russian. In an environment where Jews became increasingly politicised (also because paradoxically during this time they became more integrated into European societies (see, Brenner, 2002; Davis and Coffman, 2014) it is not surprising that this minority group started to formulate its own ideas about nationhood, self-determination and liberation (see Avineri, 2017). This also included a cultural revival, for example of the Hebrew language, which was preserved through religious activities, but increasingly flourished in literature and journalism as well (Avineri, 2017; Brenner, 2002).

[29] The Haganah was founded in 1920 and later split into the *Irgun*, a more violent wing, known for its attack of the King David Hotel and the Deir Yassin massacre (Davis and Coffman, 2014). After the establishment of the State of Israel it became incorporated into the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF).

since all of these approaches have sub-streams and are influenced by different Zionist and religious thinkers, they share in common that they envision a Jewish national homeland.

Zionism has considerably shaped Israel's status as a Jewish and democratic state, which will be discussed in further detail in the next section. Different approaches to Zionism influenced demands and compromises during Israel's negotiations with the Palestinians such as where the borders of the Israeli and Palestinian state should be drawn. After Rabin's assassination in 1995, Israeli politics regarding peace with the Palestinians has shifted increasingly to the right under the governments of Netanyahu, Sharon, and Olmert whose policies led to the construction of a barrier and subjected 85 percent of the territory of historic Palestine under Israeli control (Gelvin, 2014).

Despite their differences, all Zionist approaches confirm the Jewish character of Israel, which is at the heart of the Proclamation of Independence (Provisional Government of Israel, 1948). Since the end of the 1970s, post-Zionism emerged as a set of perspectives that are critical towards Zionism, envisioning a transformation of Israel that protects and advances the interests of all its citizens, regardless of their ethnicity and thus giving non-Jewish citizens equal status to Jewish citizens (Kelman, 1998; Pappé, 1997; Silberstein, 2013). Yet, post-Zionism remained mainly an academic movement and has only a very limited following (Silberstein, 2013).

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM

Arab nationalism developed at the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ century, influenced by Western concepts of nationalism and as a response, first towards the rule under the Ottoman Empire and then towards the colonial rule imposed by European powers (Hassassian, 2002). The distinctiveness of Palestinian nationalism, grounded on the idea of the existence of a Palestinian people in a Palestinian homeland, emerged later during the 1920s and 1930s in an environment of increasing resistance and suspicion by the native population towards the British Mandate and Zionist aspirations to form a Jewish state (Ghanem, 2013). Palestinian nationalism did not only form as a response to Zionism but rather as a

resistance ideology[30] among competing ideologies of European colonialism, Zionism, Arab nationalism and other local nationalisms that appeared after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (Muslih, 1987). From the outset, the Palestinian national movement was characterised by tribalism and internal divisions and rivalries (Hassassian, 2002), which would later constitute one of its major weaknesses in the face of countering Zionist aspirations. Hassassian (2002) argued that this fragmentation was also influenced by a British policy of divide and rule, which has caused leading Palestinian families to work against each other.

In 1936, a series of events led to the escalation of violence between Arabs, Jews and the British (Gelvin, 2014). The Great revolt lasted for three years and was accompanied by an increasing militarisation on both sides (Gelvin, 2014; Kimmerling and Migdal, 2009). While the Zionist movement was expanding during this time, the results of the revolt were disappointing for the Palestinian national movement, whose leadership went into exile (Ghanem, 2013). In such a state, the Palestinian movement was not well equipped for the consequences of the 1948 war that decreased the number of Palestinians in the new State of Israel from 940,000 to 160,000 due to expulsion and flight (Cayman, 1984 quoted in Ghanem, 2013).

The dispersion of the Palestinian population across the region created numbers of internal and external refugees and seriously disrupted political processes of forming a Palestinian national consciousness and community, which lacked a stable and unified leadership until the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964 (Ghanem, 2013). Whilst the nationalistic movement succeeded in uniting support by local Palestinians and the diaspora, an increasing split between the nationalistic-secular and the religious forces emerged (Hassassian, 2002).

[30] Muslih (1987) argued that the influence of Zionism on the emergence of Palestinian nationalism is often overstated. While it played a role in focusing Palestinian national aspirations, it rather emerged from a fragmentation of Arab nationalism and the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire by the European powers, which led to a rise of local nationalisms. He described both Arab and Palestinian nationalism as inspired by the fashion of nationalism in Europe, subscribing to liberal thought, self-determination and secularism. Thus, it was viewed by its supporters as embracing all indigenous groups, including Jews, but resisting the idea of domination by outside powers, be it European colonizers or Zionists (Muslih, 1987).

Under the leadership of Arafat, the *Fatah* (Palestinian National Liberation Movement) and thus the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation), which became dominated by the Fatah, emerged as the major representative organisation of the Palestinian population, shaping Palestinian national aspirations (Ghanem, 2013; Kimmerling and Migdal, 2009). Previously, the PLO defined Judaism as a religion but did not recognise it as a legitimate nationality and Jews as belonging to their respective nation-states (Ghanem, 2013) [31]. In the face of the need for wider international recognition, support and, pressure to act following the first Intifada, the PLO redefined its vision of a Palestinian state as secular and democratic, stating to treat all citizens equally, irrespective of their religious background (Ghanem, 2013)[32]. During the peace talks, which led to the Oslo agreement, the PLO constituted its agenda on the UN resolutions, which partitioned Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish state alongside each other (Ghanem, 2013). While a high number of Palestinians supported the peace process, at the same time many also saw violence as the only tool to force the Israelis to make concessions (Kimmerling and Migdal, 2009).

After the death of Arafat, the Palestinian leadership entered a crisis, which intensified after Hamas won the elections in 2006 following their growing popularity since the Second Intifada in 2002 (Hassassian, 2002). This has caused political tensions and rivalry between the Hamas and the PLO, leaving the Palestinians an unstable government that struggles with conducting good governance and is accused of corruption (Gelvin, 2014; Ghanem, 2013). Yet, recently, the Fatah and Hamas have started a reconciliation process after Hamas declared that it would transfer its responsibility for Gaza to the Palestinian Authority (Rasgon, 2017).

In the face of stagnant peace negotiations, the president of the Palestinian Authority Abbas decided to take the case of Palestinian statehood to the United Nations, where the General

[31] They referred to the immigrant background of most Jewish-Israelis, yet there was also an indigenous Jewish population in Palestine (Bechor, 1995 quoted in Ghanem, 2013).

[32] Ghanem (2013) outlined while Zionism conflates the idea of Judaism as a religion and a nationality, the political agenda of the PLO emphasises the distinction between Zionism and Judaism, where the former is seen as a 'racist movement' and expected to be renounced by Jews in turn for the integration into a future Palestinian state.

Assembly voted in favour of Palestinian membership and leading the Palestinian Authority to declare the State of Palestine (Gelvin, 2014).

Whilst many Arab-Palestinian citizens in Israel affiliate with Palestinian nationalism and the events in the occupied territories, their situation is considerably different than those who live in the West Bank and Gaza. The remainder of this section will deal with diversity and minority rights in Israel and thus it focuses on the situation of Arab-Palestinian citizens in Israel among other groups in Israel's diverse society.

## POLICIES ADDRESSING DIVERSITY AND MINORITY RIGHTS IN ISRAEL

It was mentioned earlier that the Israeli state was founded on a Zionist ethos that emerged among European Jews. Since then, Ashkenazim[33] have managed to establish themselves as a dominant group, shaping the political and socio-economic structures and control the country's public resources (Ghanem, 2010; Shalom Chetrit, 2010). Western ideas of nationalism have dominated Zionism (Swirski, 1999), representing "a European Jewish solution to a European Jewish problem" (Shalom Chetrit, 2010:23).

After the establishment of the state, a Constituent Assembly was elected (and became later the Knesset, the Israeli parliament) with the task of writing a constitution. However, it was decided to inscribe the fundamental principles of the state in a couple of basic laws. Israel's basic laws resemble a constitution defining the state's institutions and their role, the protection of civic and human rights and the ownership of land among others (Kretzmer, 1996). Besides, Israel's legal system constitutes itself mainly on the common law, largely influenced by the English legislation of the Mandate and legislation from the Ottoman Empire (Friedman, 1975). For example, the millet system from the Ottomans was retained, which assigned the control to the respective religious authority (Muslim, Jewish or Christian) over important aspects of social life such as marriage, divorce, and burial (Saban, 2006).

[33] The term Ashkenazim refers to Jews with Western European ancestry.

Israel's status as a liberal democracy has been challenged by some academics. For example, Smooha (1997) described Israel as an archetype of ethnic-democracy, underpinned by an ethnic nationalism, maintaining that a separate ethnic group with a common descent, culture, language or religion claims belonging to an exclusive homeland and its right to self-determination in this territory (Smooha, 2002). In response to Smooha's concept of ethnic democracy, Yiftachel (2006) and Ghanem et al. (1998) labelled Israel instead an ethnocracy, raising doubts about its democratic character, due to its rigid ethnic hierarchy and lack of equal and inclusive citizenship, which continues to inform its political structure despite slight improvements. Ghanem et al. (1998) explained that citizenship in Israel cannot be inclusive, as it is anchored in Israel's raison d'être that it is the state and the political tool of the Jewish people only. Mann (2004) and Ghanem et al. (1998) described equal citizenship in an ethnic state as irreconcilable differences and thus ethnos and demos as opposing or contradictory principles, whose hybridity can lead to a distorted acceptance of inequality as inherent in the democratic system (Ghanem et al., 1998).

The status of minority rights in Israel gives a further indication about the state of democracy in Israel. There is a range of group-differentiated rights that are granted to Arab-Palestinian citizens and other minority groups, such as the recognition of Arabic as an official language (which stems from the British Mandatory legislation), whilst their access to national rights, self-government, and allocation rights are limited (Saban, 2006). After the first and second Intifada, more egalitarian policies were adopted towards Arab-Palestinians in terms of the recognition of discrimination and the relationship between the police and minorities. However, Saban (2006) claimed that there remain "taboo territories" (p.899) that prevent minorities from pursuing extensive political changes such as transforming the nature of the state into a binational or civic state.

Arab-Palestinian citizens in Israel are granted basic political rights, such as free, democratic and proportional elections and the opportunity for political organisation and activity (Al-Haj, 2002). Yet, Al-Haj (2002) argued that these rights are limited during increased tensions under the umbrella of 'security' legislation and policies. This remains

part of a wider process of 'negative racialisation' of Arab citizens in Israel, underpinned by a construction of them as a security threat and the demand for 'active control' over Palestinians (Abu-Saad, 2004). Due to the ethnic-national character of the state, Arab-Palestinians are basically excluded from full-citizenship and disadvantaged in terms of socio-economic welfare (Abu-Saad, 2004; Ghanem, 2010; Lustick, 1980; Rouhana and Ghanem, 1998; Smooha, 1990; Yiftachel, 1999). There is a range of discriminatory laws affecting Arab-Palestinian citizens in the realm of property and ownership of land, housing, family unification, the commemoration of the Nakba in schools, the revocation of citizenship and the expansion of the powers of security forces (Adalah, 2017, Saban, 2006).

It was argued above that the political culture and ideology has been largely shaped by a Zionist and thus Ashkenazi ethos. Besides legislation, this has sustained a subtler cultural hegemony that privileges (white) Ashkenazi Jews over Mizrachim and other citizens of non-European descent. During the 1950s the Jewish population doubled as a result of the Holocaust and emigration from the Middle East and North African countries (Davis and Coffman, 2014). Racist discourses and identity constructions common among White European cultures have served to preserve the Ashkenazi dominance in the face of an increasing Mizrachi and Sephardi population. Shalom Chetrit (2010) argued that a common discourse among Zionists portrayed Mizrachi immigrants as uncultured, inferior and backward.

Officially, Mizrachim were integrated into the political and socio-economic structures, which were shaped and dominated by Ashkenazim (Ghanem, 2010). The cultural assimilation and 'modernisation' of Mizrachim, whose culture was not only portrayed as primitive but also as the enemy's culture, was conceived as an important aspect of nation-building (Dahan and Levy, 2000). Yet, in practice they were allocated to peripheral areas, characterised by a range of social problems like poverty and unemployment and being expected to provide cheap and unskilled labour (Shafir and Peled, 2002; Smooha, 1978), which attached to them a social stigma that is still visible today (Ghanem, 2010). Moreover, Mizrachim were marginalised in terms of their social rights, housing and, education (Shafir and Peled, 2002). Although the Knesset (Israel's parliament) responded

with an integration plan in 1968 to growing inequalities between children from different neighbourhoods and socio-economic backgrounds, this reform has not been successful since practices of segregation and exclusion continued (Dahan and Levy, 2000). The Mizrahi community became increasingly politicised and vocalised its demands for equality and inclusion through worker's strikes and demonstrations, through the Black Panther movement and later through the formation of parties that advocate for 'Mizrahi interests' (Shalom Chetrit, 2000). While Mizrachim are largely integrated into the majority population in Israel, a gap between Mizrachim and Ashkenazim remains in terms of income and education levels (Cohen, 1998; Cohen et al., 2007).

The following section will assess the education system and the subject of citizenship education as a response to diversity and conflict in Israel.

## EDUCATION AND POLICY RESPONSES TO THE CONFLICT IN ISRAEL

The fact that the violent conflict in Israel is still ongoing is likely to be one of the main reasons that the educational policy response to address the conflict and diversity in Israel has been less developed, compared to Northern Ireland. This section outlines how the education system and the citizenship curriculum accommodate diversity and represent an educational response to the conflict. Whereas contact programmes were mainly initiated by non-governmental organisations such as the bilingual school movement (to which I will refer below in the description of the education system), some policymakers and educators have also envisioned the new citizenship curriculum as a way to provide students with a better understanding of the conflicts and diversity within Israel's society (Ichilov et al., 2005).

### EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL

Israel's education system is structured into kindergarten, pre-school, primary school, post-primary, secondary and higher education. Secondary education is divided into different

types of high schools and vocational schools, either preparing students for non-academic professions or the matriculation certificate (*bagrut*) that is a prerequisite to enter higher education (Iram and Shemida, 1998). To accommodate its diverse society, it is split into a state sector, a state-religious sector, a Jewish-religious sector and an Arab sector, which includes the Arab-Palestinian minority, Druze, and Bedouins. It is largely administered through a single control, the Ministry of Education. There is an additional private sector that comprises mainly religious institutions such as the ultra-orthodox religious and Christian denominational schools (Iram and Shemida, 1998). It is claimed that the education system is characterised by disparities between the Arab and Hebrew-speaking sector mainly regarding the level of autonomy in the organisation and management and the disproportionate allocation of resources (Abu-Saad, 2004; Al-Haj, 1995; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Pinson, 2007b; Swirski, 1999).

After the establishment of Israel, the organisers were charged with the task to organise education for the Arab-Palestinian minority and established a branch for Arab education. The major issues emerged around the language of instruction and the content of the curriculum taught in Arabic-speaking schools. It was decided that the language of instruction in primary and high schools will be Arabic (Amara and Mar'i, 2002). Saban (2006) stated that the right to be educated in their native language is probably the most extensive minority right granted to the Arab minority. In terms of the content of the curriculum it was feared that in a separate autonomous sector anti-Jewish or anti-state sentiments could be promoted, so they are required to teach the same curriculum as state schools (Amara and Mar'i, 2002). However, in reality, the Arab-Palestinian minority is required to become bilingual and bicultural, they learn Hebrew and study about Jewish culture through the curriculum (Saban, 2006). Following Saban, fluency in Hebrew is essential since higher education is largely conducted in Hebrew and it is usually required to access the labour market.

In terms of education for minorities in Israel, the amendments to the state education law in 2000 were important. It recognises officially for the first time the Arab minority's distinct identity, culture and heritage and states that is it one of the objectives of the

education system to learn about these topics (Agbaria, 2016b), Yet, Agbaria (2016b) also noted that this legislation failed to grant any autonomy to the Arab education sector, which remains a problem since it limits the minority's influence on the content of the curriculum while the religious educational sector was granted administrative and pedagogical autonomy in regard to the content of the curriculum.

More recently a new school type emerged that has parallels to the integrated school sector in Northern Ireland. These are bilingual schools, which are recognised as non-religious schools and supported by the Ministry of Education. Thus, for the most part, they use the standard curriculum of the state non-religious sector (Bekerman, 2009a). The first Israeli-Palestinian bilingual school was established in 1981 in Neveh Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, a small Jewish-Palestinian settlement (Feuerverger, 1998). A network of bilingual schools was co-founded by individual educators in 1997, who established their first two bilingual schools in 1998 and expanded to five schools (Hand-in-Hand, 2015). However, since the number of schools remains small and they are mostly attended by students from a middle-class background, they only cater to a small part of the population (Bekerman, 2005).

## CITIZENSHIP CURRICULUM IN ISRAEL

### *THE SUBJECT AND CONTENT*

Until 1970, citizenship[34] did not exist as an independent subject but a broader approach to citizenship was employed, more through the participation at ceremonies and related subjects, mediating knowledge about formal aspects of political institutions (Cohen, 2017). During the 1990s, a committee[35] was appointed to examine the state of citizenship education and it suggested that since the current curriculum was out-dated there was a

[34] Most academics writing about Israel use term 'civics', but in the thesis, I will use the term 'citizenship education' to, make it more consistent with Northern Ireland. As the next Chapter will explain, some theorists (see for example McLaughlin, 1992) have outlined a difference between civics and citizenship education. However, in theory and practice, the approach to citizenship education in Israel can vary and moves between these two understandings.

[35] Drawing on the work of the Shenhar and the Kremnizer committee, the Ministry of Education has published a new policy directive for civic education in 1994 and implemented a new civics curriculum in Jewish schools in 2000 and in Arab schools in 2001 (Ichilov, 2008; Pinson, 2011).

need to formulate a new one (Cohen, 2016 cited in Cohen, 2017). The new curriculum was introduced in 2000 in Jewish secular and Arab schools, while state-religious and private schools remained exempted from the official curriculum. In 2009, citizenship was also introduced as a compulsory subject for junior high schools, whereas before it was only taught from 10th to 12th grade when many students are preparing for their final examination (*bagrut*). While being traditionally assessed through a written examination, it was decided in 2008, to add the implementation task (*matlat bitzuah*) as an additional form of assessment. It demands from students to identify an issue in their society, which they then research and suggest solutions for (Cohen, 2017).

The *bagrut* is the national high-stake matriculation examination whose results determine the acceptance into higher education and the students' placement in the military service (Cohen, 2016). Angrist and Lavy (2009) found that matriculation holders in Israel comparatively earn a 25 percent higher salary. Whilst the passing of the final examination is crucial for the social mobility among minorities (Obgu, 1999), they tend to have lower passing rates than students from the mainstream state sector. Arab-Palestinian students are less likely to pass the examination than students from the state sector (48 percent compared to 67 percent in 2007), but it is also important to note that there are differences in the Arab sector: whilst Druze and Christian students have similar passing rates as Jewish students from the state sector, Muslims and Bedouins have considerably lower rates (Hemmings, 2010). Some explanations offered by Hemmings (2010) are the general lower socio-economic status among Arab-Palestinian citizens, the heavy work-load that is caused by the learning of Hebrew and written Arabic[36] and in the case of the Bedouin students, their remote location that makes it difficult to access schools.

In terms of its content, citizenship education in Israel has been largely shaped by the promotion of the Zionist project, Jewish culture, identity and its values (Ichilov, 2005). The decision to review the curriculum in the 1990s emerged among concerns to strengthen the democratic aspects of the citizenship curriculum and growing demands for human

[36] Written Arabic differs from spoken Arabic that students learn at home and in their communities. A high proficiency in Hebrew is required to enter higher education, since almost all institutions teach in Hebrew except for some teacher colleges (Hemmings, 2010).

rights education (Ichilov et al., 2005). The new curriculum emphasises its intention to promote a common conception of citizenship among all groups in Israeli society and mentions the need to respect each group's cultural differences:

> *[t]o inculcate a common Israeli identity, together with the development of distinct national identities, and to impart to students the values of pluralism and tolerance, educate students to accept the diversity that exists within Israeli society, and to respect those who are different from oneself (. . .) (Ministry of Education 2001:10, cited in Ichilov 2003).*

This statement expresses the intention to respect or even nourish "distinct national identities" and a "common Israeli" identity while accepting the inevitable diversity within society. Yet, I outline below that the curriculum remains undermined by a discourse that marginalises certain groups in Israeli society.

The mandatory overarching topic "the government and politics of the state of Israel" can be broken down in exploring the state's Jewish and democratic values and their internal tensions and reality, the features of Israel's government and political system and finally current political debates in Israel (Bekerman and Cohen, 2017). Bekerman and Cohen (2017) divide the curriculum's goal into three sections: cognitive goals - such as knowledge of the political, economic and social system, key terms of social sciences and the ability to evaluate issues from different perspectives; value-based goals – including values of Israel as a Jewish democratic state, the development of a civic identity in addition to one's national identity and respecting human rights, civil rights and the fulfilment of one's duties as a citizen including participation in public issues; and finally disposition goals – to develop the ability to apply these values and ideas, to evaluate the political system and, to use critical thinking skills in a way to draw on facts, identify connections between different phenomena, develop complex opinions and tolerance toward different opinions. These goals partly overlap with underlying pedagogical principles, such as the presentation of different views, fostering tolerance and respect, analysing critically current events and developing skills that empower students as independent learners (Bekerman and Cohen, 2017).

Tesler (2005) noted, however, that despite the curriculum's ambitions to create a 'common Israeli identity' there is no coherent understanding of citizenship among all different groups in Israel and thus each group teaches its own understanding of citizenship in its schools. While this is certainly true for the different groups within Israel's Jewish population, for Arab-Palestinians the curriculum does not provide a space to teach about their history and identity. The curriculum and history textbooks are still undermined by a "Zionist historiography" (Pappé, 1997:30; Podeh, 2000; Shohat, 2003:61). For example, it still does not fully account for Israel's responsibility of having created the Palestinian refugee problem even though considerable progress has been made to present a more complex picture of history (Podeh, 2000). While Zionist history is glorified across different school subjects (Al-Haj, 2005; Bar-Tal, 1998b; Firer, 1998; Pinson, 2007b; 2013), Palestinian and Arab people are presented without historical and cultural heritage as well as without a collective identity (Abu-Saad, 2004; Agbaria, 2011; Agbaria et al., 2015; Ichilov, 2008; Peled, 2006). Whereas Palestinian students learn about the Israeli narrative of historical events, most Jewish students are not presented with a Palestinian narrative throughout their educational career (Al-Haj, 2002), which is reinforced by the more recent restriction imposed on schools to teach students about the *Nakba*[37]. In this way, the aim of the curriculum to confront students with different perspectives is limited to what falls under the mainstream Zionist narratives. As Sheps (2016) outlined, the "dilemma spaces" for teachers are controversial issues such as the occupation, the conflict, and relations with Arab neighbours and Arab-Palestinian citizens. This is because they tend to stir students' emotions and may challenge mainstream Zionist views and opportunities to address these topics in the classroom seem limited (Sheps, 2016).

### *EDUCATION AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM AND RACISM*

A central aspect of citizenship education in Israel today is the teaching about the Holocaust. Even though it is officially situated under history education, it will become

[37] The Knesset passed a bill in 2011 that allows the ministry of finance to decrease or even to withhold and withdraw funding for institutions that commemorate the Nakba day as a day of mourning, following the rationale that the teaching of the Nakba would politicise Palestinian children, as it reminds them of the loss of their land (Peled-Elhanan, 2012).

evident in the discussion of the data that it is largely interpreted by schools, teachers, and students as an aspect of citizenship education as well. In the early years after the formation of the state, teaching about the Holocaust was marginal in the curriculum, since it conflicted with the ideals that political Zionism sought to promote (Porat, 2004; Resnik, 2003). Over time, the Holocaust was increasingly incorporated into Israeli students' everyday experiences and became an obligatory topic in the curriculum, strengthening the notion of the Jewish-Israeli population as a community of fate (Porat, 2004), to reinforce "a constant sense of threat" (Rouhana and Bar-Tal, 1998:764) and an image of the continuous victimisation of the Jewish people; in need for military power and a state with a Jewish identity, as a justification for "Israel's raison d'être" (Resnik, 2003:308).

Consequently, Rosenberg (2013, cited in Cohen, 2017) argued that while it is important that the curriculum addresses anti-Semitism and racism, education about the Holocaust is also politicised in a sense that it is approached from a nationalistic Jewish perspective. In doing so, it undermines the universal character of racism as a strategy of domination and dilutes it through a patriotic discourse. Instead of creating an understanding of the political and structural nature of racism, it rather serves to nourish a sense of threat and victimhood.

### *EDUCATION FOR THE MILITARY SERVICE*

Another extra-curricular aspect of citizenship education in Israel is the preparation of students for the military service. Again, I decided to include it here because it emerged as a central aspect of citizenship education among the participants in the discussion of the data. Lemish (2003) argued that militarism is normalised in Israel's society, since young people meet military personnel through their family, in public transportation and public places for example through security checks in train stations, shopping malls, supermarkets and even schools; where memorial days and public commemorations also act as a reminder of dead soldiers. This everyday experience becomes reinforced through education, as students are encouraged to enlist in the military service during their final years, making the possibility 'to die for one's country' the ultimate civic responsibility (Lemish, 2003). Schools play a central role in promoting military service as an important aspect of Israeli citizenship (Ichilov et al., 2005), mediated through the civic teacher and

by having military personnel coming to schools to encourage conscription (Lemish, 2003). Pinson (2011) argued that the success of citizenship in Jewish-secular schools is measured according to how many students enlist in the service, which contributes to the fact that citizenship education's role is largely interpreted as to prepare for the military service.

### SUMMARY

This section summarised briefly the history of the conflict in Israel and Palestine and how it influenced the emergence of a separate education system and educational policies. The major challenges for citizenship education in Israel are to address the diversity of its population and issues of social justice that continue to fuel the conflict. The privileging of a Jewish-Zionist culture, narrative, identity, and citizenship in regard to other groups undermines their cultural rights, principles of equal citizenship, and justice. The citizenship curriculum seeks to instil on the one hand a republican/communitarian notion of citizenship for its Jewish citizens and on the other hand an individualist concept for non-Jewish citizens. Previous research suggests that this causes various problems such as alienation among minority groups (Pinson, 2008; 2013) and a lack of serious engagement with multiculturalism and racism (Al-Haj, 2002; Rosenberg, 2013, cited in Cohen, 2017). Additionally, a strong nationalistic focus that underpins the Israeli citizenship curriculum (and arguably history as well) is at risk to undermine critical thinking and the engagement with different perspectives on the conflict that might challenge dominant national narratives (see Chapter two for a more detailed explanation of the problems with nationalistic citizenship education).

## CONCLUSION

In Northern Ireland and Israel, one can observe how identity politics has not only shaped the nature of the conflict but continues to influence understandings of the history of the conflict, notions of citizenship and belonging within each community. Moreover, both contexts expose the potential of either nationalism, religion and the combination of both to serve as an ideology of domination that is not only entrenched in the roots of the conflict

but continues to impact on conflict transformation. The separate education systems in these divided societies limit young people's exposure to the narratives, identities, and views of the other community and/or minorities. Educational policies in Northern Ireland have targeted this separation by facilitating contact between the communities through integrated education, shared education and other initiatives, while in Israel 'contact' as an educational response has been only introduced informally or as an extracurricular activity. Yet, this educational response has been critiqued on the basis that contact draws on a cultural-psychological understanding of the conflict, which frames sectarianism and racism as the result of individual prejudice. In contrast, the citizenship curriculum in both societies draws on structural explanations of the conflict as it addresses its historical and political context. Nevertheless, as issues of responsibility and accountability for the past (and continuous) violence could challenge the legitimacy of the state, it seems that structural educational responses to the conflict are at risk to be diluted, because there is lack of support and incentive for teachers and schools to critically address the conflict, sectarianism, and racism.

Beside these commonalities, there are also important differences between both societies in terms of groups rights. Whilst in Northern Ireland both communities are granted collective rights[38] in regard to citizenship and cultural rights and equal allocation of funding and resources in education, this is not the case in Israel. Minorities are not granted collective cultural and national rights and are largely disadvantaged in terms of funding and resources in education.

The next Chapter further unpicks the differences between cultural-psychological and structural approaches to identity, racism/sectarianism and conflict and how these inform different educational approaches to citizenship.

[38] Regarding language, Catholics in Northern Ireland are not granted collective rights. Attempts to introduce a legislation on the equal recognition of the Irish as a second official language in Northern Ireland by Sinn Féin are supported by the SDLP and the Alliance Party but blocked by the DUP (Burke, 2018).

# CHAPTER 2: CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION, HEGEMONY, AND IDENTITY

## INTRODUCTION

Whilst the previous Chapter set out the political and educational contexts, the purpose of this Chapter is to discuss the theoretical lens that facilitates a deeper understanding of how citizenship is taught and learned in different schools in Northern Ireland and Israel. Among a variety of different theories that enhance and extend this understanding, the thesis employs the theoretical framework of cultural hegemony, providing the basis for the discussion of the thesis' two key concepts of citizenship education and identity. Taking a (neo)-Marxist perspective that focuses on the role of power is useful in exploring the state of citizenship education in these two societies because it illuminates structural political issues that permeate the teaching of citizenship and identity.

The first section will establish the connection between Gramsci's work on cultural hegemony and education in general, drawing on the work of critical educationalists such as Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, and Michael Apple. The main argument presented in this Chapter is that education serves as an arena for different groups who seek to establish their ideology as the dominant one and facilitates the transmission of this ideology to the wider population. This is followed by the claim that understandings of identity are shaped by these ideologies. The concept of identity is arguably the most controversial aspect of citizenship education, particularly in divided societies. This section explains why the thesis draws on the work of postcolonial theorists such as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, and Stuart Hall, as it provides an approach that is closely linked to the framework of cultural hegemony. These theorists reject essentialised and psychologised views of identity, which too often overlook the fluid and constructed nature of the concept, which is as a product of power relations.

The relationship between citizenship and identity is the main focus of the second section. I start by outlining the two dominant approaches to citizenship; liberal and communitarian/

republican citizenship. This is followed by a discussion of national and pluralist forms of citizenship (multicultural, global, cosmopolitan etc.), which are critically examined against the framework of cultural hegemony. I will conclude that there is a need for the re-conceptualisation of citizenship, which is affected by the contradictions between universalism and particularism. These contradictions are expected to arise in the theory of citizenship education, which is discussed in the last section.

The last section attempts to link the theoretical contribution of hegemony, identity, and citizenship education and explains their relationship. It outlines the development of citizenship education and its different aspects such as education for democracy, participation, difference, human rights, and peace. The Chapter concludes with narrowing down the political agendas that inform the respective approaches to citizenship education.

## EDUCATION AND CULTURAL HEGEMONY

### WHAT IS CULTURAL HEGEMONY?

Cultural hegemony draws on Marxist thinking to describe the formation and maintenance of existing power relations in societies. The concept is attributed to Antonio Gramsci, who further developed and revised the works of Marx. Essentially, Gramsci (1971/1929) framed hegemony as a form of cultural, moral and ideological leadership over subordinate groups. He emphasised the difference between domination and hegemony: whereas the former is built on physical coercion, hegemony represents a subtler form of rule; it is a form of ideological control and consent. Gramsci divided superstructure into political society and civil society. Whereas the political society is constituted on the rationale of domination through coercive forces, such as the police or the legal system, the civil society constitutes itself on hegemony and non-coercive forces such as schools, churches, political parties or the family.

Hegemony is essential to maintain a status quo since domination is usually not enough to gain popular support. Consequently, hegemony is not a static, totalising form of subordination, but a system of values, attitudes, beliefs, and moralities, which are

mediated through processes of socialisation. Through these processes, the ruling class seeks to instil their particular values, moralities, and beliefs as the 'common-sense'. Since hegemony differs from direct coercion, Gramsci described it as a dynamic process, as "hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed" (1971/1929:211). However, at the same time, the goal of cultural hegemony remains cultural reproduction (Althusser, 1971; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990), ensuring that the power of the elite is reproduced, for example through capitalist relations.

The concept of 'common-sense' is closely connected to the term of ideology. Foucault (1972; 1984) criticised Marxist approaches to ideology because they assume Marxism as a universal truth as opposed to the ideology of capitalism (Foucault, 1984: 60). Instead, Foucault rejected the notion of ideology altogether as it implies that there is an objective truth 'out there', warning that "there is a kind of nostalgia; behind the concept of ideology, the nostalgia for a quasi-transparent form of knowledge, free from all error and illusion" (Foucault 1972:117). Foucault thus urged an understanding of 'ideology' as a value-laden and biased term, which is often used to denounce the validity of an oppositional agenda. Similar to Foucault, Gramsci (1971/1929) emphasised the need to situate terms such as 'ideology,' 'truth' or 'rationality' in their historical and political context, instead of viewing them as universal. Speaking about different ideological forms, Gramsci offers a way of discussing the workings of different ideologies through the concepts of cultural hegemony and counter-hegemony, using the term 'ideology' to describe ideas that underpin systems, institutions, and movements in our societies.

To establish a hegemonic universality, competing political ideologies in society generate empty or floating signifiers (Laclau, 1996). Signifiers serve to sustain the existing hegemony in place, by filling it with a content that is in line with the respective ideology. As an example, Zizek (2000) referred to 'democracy' as a possible empty signifier, since its meaning is not predetermined, but the result of a hegemonic struggle about what it defines and who will be included and excluded from it. According to Laclau, empty signifiers are important for the concept of cultural hegemony, since their presence is "the

very condition of hegemony" (1996:43). A group needs to establish signifiers to define its ideology and its organising principles to constitute its hegemony.

This has consequences for the relationship between universality and particularity (Laclau, 1992; 1996; 2000). Laclau described the universal as empty by itself and eventually filled with a particular (non-neutral) content resulting from a struggle for hegemony. As an example, Laclau (2000) referred to Eurocentrism, which established "European culture" as universal human interests of civilisation and modernisation by terming other cultures as particular, as "peoples without history expressing precisely their incapacity to represent the universal" (Laclau, 2000: 86). Thus, the claim to universality is a powerful tool for establishing cultural hegemony over other cultures or identities.

The thesis draws on cultural hegemony as a theoretical frame to understand citizenship education. In the following, I will demonstrate how citizenship emerges through education as a form of (subtle) cultural hegemony.

## CULTURAL HEGEMONY IN EDUCATION

Education is one of the social spheres through which hegemony as a form of cultural, moral and ideological leadership over subordinate groups is distributed. Althusser (1971) built on this idea; criticising the argument that the school is a site of reproduction for capitalist relations. The education system becomes an "ideological state apparatus" (Althusser, 1971:144), whose role is to transmit the ideology of the ruling classes. Similarly, Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) explained that the education system serves to legitimatise and to reproduce class inequalities inherent in capitalist societies. Through their power and privileged position in society, dominant classes define the cultural capital as an expression of their value, belief and moral systems. This cultural capital is distributed through schools, which set the acquirement of cultural capital as a requirement for educational success and thus function as sites of cultural reproduction to preserve the unequal social, political and economic structure. Children from dominant classes are privileged because they have the advantage of representing the cultural capital of society.

Consequently, cultural capital is as a form of hegemony that sustains social control without the need for overt or coercive forms of domination (Apple, 2004). Giroux (1984) and Apple described how hegemony dominates through the overt and the covert curriculum. Features of socialisation, such as norms, values and belief systems are not only transmitted by formal curricula and textbooks, but also by the covert or hidden curriculum, which includes the school, classroom life, daily routines, symbols and relationships (Margolis, 2001).

It was mentioned earlier that hegemony sustains itself through ideological control and consent based on a system of values and beliefs (Gramsci, 1971/1929). These particular values and beliefs become established as "common-sense" (p. 323), defining a set of generally held assumptions and beliefs in a society that are mediated through processes of socialisation, such as education. Consequently, the content of 'official knowledge' or 'common-sense' is shaped by dominant groups in society (Apple, 2004). Apple stated that consent and popular support for cultural capital are generated through presenting 'official knowledge' as legitimate and neutral. Similarly, constituting educators as neutral actors teaching neutral knowledge in neutral educational institutions serves to give the impression of the neutrality of the cultural capital (Apple, 2004). This hides the fact that the knowledge mediated through schools is selected from a wider universe of social knowledge. Apple explained how the distribution of a group's culture and knowledge through education depends on its standing in society:

> *The lack of certain kinds of knowledge—where your particular group stands in the complex process of cultural preservation and distribution—is related, no doubt, to the absence in that group of certain kinds of political and economic power in society. (2004:14).*

For example, the lack of African-American, Native-American or women's perspectives in the history curriculum in the United States reflects their marginalised political and socio-economic position in society (Banks, 2008). Thus, Phillips (1998) depicted debates about official history curricula as a battleground for identity, culture, and hegemony.

The process of neutralisation of knowledge also has the effect of depoliticising the dominant culture, which is presented as apolitical and legitimate (Apple, 2004). Giroux (1997) argued that conservative and liberal educators have promoted processes of depoliticisation and emphasised their commitment to individualism, choice and competitive ethic in their educational policies. Giroux (1980) claimed that prior to the 20th century there was no attempt to conceal this purpose of social control for obedience and conformity. Yet, this visibility of control was lost during the 20th century, when educational theory experienced a paradigm shift from political to technical with the emergence of the new rationales of efficiency and control. Therefore, critical educationalists, such as Althusser, Bourdieu, Giroux, and Apple have challenged the liberal education doctrine as it portrays knowledge in a neutral and universal way that fails to consider the connection between knowledge and power relations.

## COUNTER-HEGEMONY THROUGH EDUCATION?

Gramsci (1971/1929) framed the concept of "good-sense" (p.323) as a force that counteracts common sense. Building on his declaration that "everyone is a philosopher" (p.323), good-sense constitutes practical, empirical knowledge that forms what Gramsci calls "common or popular philosophy" (p.328). By challenging and historicising the 'common-sense' as a form of human action, the "good sense" can provide a critical and coherent approach that goes beyond the 'common-sense'. According to Gramsci, the "good-sense" can be nurtured through education, by providing a critical consciousness (in this case a class consciousness), by seeing through the practices of the existing hegemony and finally by forming a "philosophy of praxis" (p. 321). This philosophy of praxis, as opposed to traditional 'scientific' and seemingly ahistorical philosophy, does not serve to disguise a ruling-class strategy and can provide the basis for political action, a movement of liberation for the working classes.

Critical educators have drawn on the contingency of the "good sense" and emphasised the potential of education to counteract domination. For example, Freire (1970) saw education

for liberation and emancipation in opposition to education for domination and hegemony. He framed the latter as the banking concept of education, where the oppressed are portrayed as ignorant and are turned into passive, manageable and adaptable beings through education for domestication. Freire described domestication as "an ideologizing instrument, [which] imposes the mythification of the world instead of its truth" (1972:174). This form of education is an important pillar of hegemony, facilitating subtle control of the oppressed and being part of a general strategy of "false generosity" (Freire, 1970:45). Leonard and McLaren (2002) maintain that by building on myths that the individual and its ignorance are the source of social problems and not the system itself, the elites offer a 'false generosity' through education. For example, they prescribe to develop skills of employability as a response to unemployment without providing actual political solutions to unemployment (Leonard and McLaren, 2002).

In contrast, according to Freire (1970), education for liberation or humanist education is built on dialogue with the oppressed and encourages them to trust in their capabilities. Freire argued that transformation can only be initiated by the oppressed themselves and not by the oppressors who have lost their humanity. Consequently, any attempt to impose a discourse on the oppressed will lead to another form of domination. Education for emancipation consists of two important aspects: first, it comprises a process of reflection, which seeks to empower the oppressed to reveal processes of domination through critical thinking and second, it enables them to reclaim their humanity. The latter also implies that they are empowered to reclaim their identity and culture as "beings for themselves" (p.161) and not beings for others since they have a crucial role to sustain the status quo and the dominance of the elites.

Before the different strands of citizenship education are discussed and assessed from this perspective, the concept of identity, which is at the centre of this discussion requires some deeper theoretical elaboration.

# IDENTITY AND HEGEMONY

## CONCEPTUALISING IDENTITY: ESSENTIALIST VS ANTI-ESSENTIALIST APPROACHES

Identity remains a much-debated concept in the literature across academic disciplines. Yet it is argued that identity has become "overtheorized", as Brubaker and Cooper (2000) suggested: "Identity," […] tends to mean too much (when understood in a strong sense), too little (when understood in a weak sense), or nothing at all (because of its sheer ambiguity)" (p.1). Whilst they argued that there is a need to go beyond the term identity for greater conceptual clarity, Hall (2000) elucidated that the dilemma with identity is that it is "an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all." (p. 16). Therefore, this section attempts to clarify the approach to identity on which the thesis draws upon. It will be argued later that identity is an essential aspect of citizenship education.

### ESSENTIALISM AND ANTI-ESSENTIALISM

The literature about identity (and the closely related and equally contested concept of *culture* (Benhabib, 2002) is dominated by a major debate alongside the positions of essentialists and anti-essentialists. Essentialists draw on an understanding of human beings as "cultural" subjects that can be differentiated in a world demarcated by cultural boundaries (Grillo, 2003); whilst anti-essentialists define concepts of culture and identity as fluid as opposed to fixed, static and uniform in a reality of boundaries (Bhabha, 1994; Butler, 1993; Hall, 2000; Mouffe, 1993; Spivak, 1990).

Essentialist[39] positions claim that the experience of being a member of a certain group is based on natural, universally valid characteristics, independent from other aspects of the

[39] Traditionally, essentialist approaches to identity flourished in disciplines like anthropology, anatomy or biology that were often connected to racist projects of Western colonizers to justify exploitation, subordination and massacres committed against colonized people. Examples for these essentialist approaches that sought to promote racial ideologies and white supremacy are the work of Georges Curvier or famously the race ideology propagated in Nazi Germany.

person and assuming an experience that is constant through historical, social and political contexts (Grillo, 1995). These views have been (fortunately) discounted in most of the scientific literature, which has established that race is not a biological but a social and historical construct, used as a tool for oppressing certain groups of people (see for example Appiah, 1985; Fanon, 2008/1952). Yet, essentialist views continue to guide theoretical descriptions of identity. Before elaborating on this further, I will outline anti-essentialist approaches to identity.

Anti-essentialism is grounded in the awareness of the constructed and contingent character of our views and beliefs. Derrida (1981) maintained that the meanings of words are never fixed, always in flux and contingent in terms of time and context. This infers that identity should be understood as identification, describing a process that is constructed as a common origin, shared characteristics, and a sense of solidarity or allegiance with a person, group or ideal (Hall, 2000).

The process of identification involves defining otherness or its relation to an external object outside of the group, which in turn transforms the individual itself (Bhabha, 1994). Thus, identity is sustained reflexively by the individual and its environment (Giddens, 1991; Jenkins, 1996). For example, a positive identity can define itself by being different from the 'negative' other (Butler, 1993; Derrida, 1981; Laclau, 1990). The oppressor's identity as positive is conditioned on the existence of an 'other,' which is different and negative[40]. For example, the definition of 'otherness' has been used as a tool by white (European) people to justify the exploitation of defined 'others' (McLaren, 1995). If these images of inferiority and self-depreciation are internalised by the oppressed, they might even submit to their own oppression (Taylor, 1994). Hall (1990) maintained that the constitution of an identity is an act of power, establishing a dominant identity and hierarchy between different poles, for example, white/black or man/woman.

[40] For example, in "Black skin, white masks" Fanon (2008/1952) explained this process in the context of colonial domination, where the colonised internalize the negative construction of their identity and then aspire to imitate the culture of the coloniser. In all these cases, it is the oppressor who has the power to define the identity of the oppressed, as Fanon framed it: "What is often called a black soul is a white man's artefact." (Fanon 1991/1967:14). Thus, like in Hegel's (2005/1807) master and slave dialectic, the master can sustain his dominance and positive self-consciousness only through the construction of the slave's identity as something inferior and negative as well as through the recognition of his dominance by the slave.

Consequently, anti-essentialists claim that identity is always contingent on relationships with others and the social, historical and political context. A collective identity can provide a means of inclusion but also operate as a means of exclusion (Butler, 1993). These claims by anti-essentialists suggest that identity needs to be examined against the backdrop of power interests, or in other words, hegemony.

Nevertheless, there is another tendency in academia that dislocates identities from their historical and political context, which has been framed as the psychologisation of identities (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012). These academics challenge the work of social psychologists such as Tajfel's (1972) social identity theory and Turner's (1991) work on self-categorisation that seek to explain identification mainly through interpersonal and intergroup behaviour[41]. While both approaches outline the contingency of ingroup and outgroup identifications in different social contexts, they generally fail to consider greater historical and political contexts. Following postcolonial approaches to identity and racism, prejudice and stereotypes cannot be fully explained through human interactions independent from context but need to be understood against the background of historical oppression, such as colonialism (Fanon, 2008/1952; Hall, 2000). Phillips (2010) argued that some psychological approaches (for example Hirschfeld, 1996) are prone to essentialism because they suggest that essentialist thinking can be described simply as a human condition. Since these approaches do not look at the process of identification as connected to human political action they risk not to challenge racist, sexist or heterosexual ideologies.

Like the anti-essentialist critique, the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), deconstructs the essentialist myth by describing reality as consisting of multiple overlapping and intersecting identities. Intersectionality attacks the essentialist standpoint, arguing that the latter fragments the body of identities by singling out particular experiences, even though these cannot be understood as detached from other intersecting

[41] Other theorists who have contributed and expanded social identity theory are: Hogg and Abrams, 1988; Hogg, Terry and White, 1995; McCall and Simmons, 1978; Stets and Burke, 2000).

experiences and identities[42] (Crenshaw, 1989). Consequently, anti-essentialism and intersectionality basically embody the same critique and formulate as their main message that the contingency of identities lies between subordination and privilege (Grillo, 1995), or between the two poles of oppression and liberation (Bauman, 2004).

Despite the challenges to pin down a clear definition of identity, the thesis will draw on the following definition by Castells (1997), who framed identity as a source of meaning and experience that is given priority over other sources of meaning. Identities can have different dimensions, as self-identities or collective identities and are socially constructed, relying on historical, geographical and biological material, personal imaginations and collective memories. Their meanings are negotiated by individuals, groups, and societies in a particular historical context (Castells, 1997). The last aspect of Castells' definition is particularly relevant, as it differentiates it from other essentialist and psychological definitions by describing it as historical and contextual, urging that it must be understood beyond the immediate psychological analysis of human behaviour. Thus, leaning on Scheman (1997), instead of asking what it means to be a Catholic, a Protestant, a Palestinian or a Jew, we should ask how do people get to be one, how and who assigns this identity to someone and why. This brings the discussion back to the concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony as analytical frameworks for identity.

### IDENTITY AS HEGEMONIC AND COUNTER-HEGEMONIC

Using the concept of cultural hegemony as a theoretical framework can reveal the dynamics of subordination and privilege between different identities in a certain context. In his work on 'Orientalism', Said (1978) has drawn on cultural hegemony to outline the underpinning ideologies of Eurocentrism and European colonial and imperial projects. By creating a body of knowledge in literature, art, and science, European particularism has been presented as superior, neutral, rational and progressive. Said argued that this work established a notion of the 'orient' (as opposed to the 'occident') as something inferior, mystical, backward and irrational. Presenting the orient and occident in this dichotomy

[42] For example, the experience of discrimination by a black woman cannot be detached from her experience as being black as well as being a woman, since oppression through racism and sexism can work together.

serves to sustain Western supremacy and to justify policies of colonialism, imperialism and ‘civilising’ missions of the West.

Said's work is not the sole example that established this link between hegemony and the construction of identities/cultures: for example, Butler (1993) famously framed heterosexual hegemony that sets heterosexuality as the norm or dominant culture/identity, assessing others' bodies' viability and sexuality based on its rationales or ideology. Culture or identities are constructed as two poles based on a certain ideology that underpins the dominant cultural hegemony. Persons can find themselves in relation to the cultural hegemony on a scale, between the two ends of subordination and privilege. Therefore, identities or identifications are not locked or static but subject to the dynamics of power relations (Hall, 2000).

This approach to identity has implications for how racism is understood. Similar to the difference between essentialist and anti-essentialist approaches, racism can be framed as individual prejudice resulting from human behaviour or as oppression and privilege resulting from political and historical structures. The former depoliticises racism and frames prejudice as the result of cognition, as a ‘natural’ expression of human behaviour (Billig, 1985; Leach, 2002). In contrast, the latter understands racism as a system of advantage based on race (Wellman, 1993), which is sustained by institutional policies and cultural messages (Dixon et al., 2012; Tatum, 2000). Consequently, an anti-essentialist approach to racism exposes how cultural hegemony sustains existing privileges based on race and can be also extended to class, religion or gender.

## COUNTER-HEGEMONY: STRATEGIC ESSENTIALISM OR STRATEGIC UNIVERSALISM?

Whereas the constitution of an identity can be used as a hegemonic tool, it is also possible to construct an identity as a counter-hegemonic strategy. Ironically, essentialism can be a counter-hegemonic strategy, or, a strategy of empowerment. Oppressed or marginalised groups have drawn on essentialist identity constructions to outline their history of oppression and to define themselves as an anti-racist, post-colonialist or nationalist

movement. This is a powerful move since it has allowed them to regain their capacity for shaping their own identity that was previously taken from them by (usually white, European, colonialist) dominant groups. Spivak (1988) framed this as strategic essentialism, which can be employed as part of a political struggle. Resistance identity is constructed by those whose identity is stigmatised or devalued by the dominant culture (Castells 1997); by deconstructing the dichotomy between positive and negative images of identity. While essentialist identities can be part of an important political strategy of liberation according to the concept of intersectionality, they gloss over the distinct and complex experiences and identities of each person. Identities are formed by a context and cannot be understood apart from it since the context itself represents the condition for their existence.

Laclau (1992) argued that demands by minority groups cannot be made in terms of difference or particularity. He claimed, "an appeal to pure particularism" without any reference to universality can only be "a self-defeating enterprise" (p.87). While particularism can serve to defend the rights of marginalised minorities, it can also defend the right to self-determination of reactionary groups. Laclau claimed that in their struggle, minorities cannot base their demands on difference but they need to draw on a universal principle for their political demands to be viable. As an example, for a universal principle through which marginalised groups can advocate their political demands, Laclau (1992) suggested citizenship.

However, the next section will demonstrate that the link between citizenship and identity is contested and citizenship's universality is limited, as Laclau (1992) also admitted. The tensions between universalism and particularism are used as frames to dissect citizenship and citizenship education in the following, by outlining how citizenship education responds to 'universal' concepts such as human rights, democracy or participation.

# CITIZENSHIP AND IDENTITY

## DEFINING CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship has become and remains a 'buzzword' (Faulks, 2000; Heater, 1990), discussed in a wide array of academic literature and defined in multiple and even sometimes contradictory ways. The interest in the concept and the amount of literature that has been written on it, point at its contested character and its political importance.

Citizenship's competing definitions demonstrate that it cannot be framed in a 'neutral' fashion, as its historical legacy has made it a tool for groups to establish their power or dominance. Most descriptions about citizenship as a concept usually refer to it as emerging from the historical context of ancient Greece and Rome, depicting it as a 'Western' concept. Isin (2012) argued that the discourse about citizenship is underpinned by "an orientalist assumption that citizenship is a European invention" (p.567) (see for example Weber, 1927), despite evidence that there were forms of citizenship as an organising principle in more ancient societies. Consequently, these constructions of citizenship, based on the traditions of citizenship in ancient Greece and Rome are not universal but specific to their 'Western' context.

Following its historical legacy in the West, citizenship can be understood as a status or membership by the law of a political community, sustained by rights and responsibilities (McLean and McMillan, 2009). Citizenship is also defined as a set of social, political and economic practices (Isin and Wood, 1999), deriving from these rights and responsibilities. Additionally, the concept of identity sustains notions of citizenship, through promoting a sense of belonging to a political community. The section starts with outlining the two major approaches to citizenship that have emerged in the 'West' and thus influenced citizenship and citizenship education in Northern Ireland and Israel.

### LIBERALIST CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP

While there are different understandings of citizenship among liberal thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke, Mill, and Rawls, they all emphasised the universal and egalitarian

character of legal citizenship. Moreover, they viewed citizenship as utilitarian, as a political arrangement that primarily serves individual interests and protects individual rights (Isin and Wood, 1999). The liberal approach views individual rights as natural, universal and as predating the political community (Faulks, 2000).

Liberalism emphasises the individual above the polity and advocates a division between the public and the private. For example, Rawls (1993) differentiated between public and non-public identity: while public identity is rooted in the basic laws, defined as a legal identity as citizens with rights and duties; non-public identity is connected to a person's religion or culture (Rawls, 1985). Even though Rawls (1993) recognised the importance of the strong bond of culture, he maintained that this form of culture remains a background culture of the daily social life. He claimed that it is distinct from the political culture and should not provide a basis for citizenship. Instead, he proposed public identity, based on the political culture and liberal principles of freedom and equality as the basis for citizenship (Rawls, 1985; 1993). Among liberal and communitarian/republican theorists presented in the following, Rawls arguably advocated the most inclusive form of citizenship. However, he did not clarify whose interests, values and ideas underpin citizenship's political culture. As citizenship developed in the context of the rise of nationalism, colonialism, and imperialism during the 19$^{th}$ century (Kymlicka, 1995), this has considerably formed notions of citizenship according to white, male and upper-class interest, as I will argue later.

Mill (1972) claimed that only a common nationality can be the source of political allegiance and provide the basis for a democratic state. For him, cultural and national homogeneity is necessary to maintain a representative government and unity. Similarly, Marshall (1950) also shared the idea that common identity has an important integrative function for a welfare state. He argued that a common national identity serves to integrate

the working classes as citizens through the notion of a common culture, heritage, and possession[43].

Consequently, following Mill, Marshall, and Rawls, the universal claims of the liberal concept of citizenship are permeated by a notion of a collective identity or culture, which is arguably influenced by dominant groups in society. Despite its universal claims, liberalism has been complicit in sustaining the privilege of dominant groups, the production of inequalities and discrimination against minorities and disadvantaged groups (Isin and Wood, 1999).

Among liberal thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke and Montesquieu, there has been less emphasis on citizenship as a practice in the political sphere. While the protection of citizens refers to the private life, the political community is only a necessary framework or arrangement instead of the source of a common life (Walzer, 1989). Therefore, it is reduced to an arena where different groups compete for their private interests (Mouffe, 1992). Habermas (1994) claimed that the liberal approach positions individuals as external to the state, as private persons that only contribute to its preservation, in the form of duties or to receive rights and benefits from the state. This passivity of political participation reinforces the status quo, pointing to citizenship's suitability as a hegemonic strategy. Faulks (2000) criticised that liberalism tends to overlook power structures which constrain citizens, limiting their access to political and socio-economic resources.

### COMMUNITARIAN/REPUBLICAN CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP

Communitarian and republican approaches to citizenship vary from liberalism in their emphasis on the community or the 'common good' over individual interests. Modern theorists have drawn on the practices of citizenship in ancient Greece, where it was perceived as "the very core of life" (Heater, 1990:4). During the Renaissance, political theorists like Machiavelli and Rousseau emphasised commitment and obligation towards

[43] According to Marshall "[c]itizenship requires a bond of a different kind, a direct sense of community membership based on loyalty to a civilisation which is a common possession. It is a loyalty of free men endowed with rights and protected by a common law." (Marshall 1950:24).

the political community and promoted political participation as the citizen's responsibility (Faulks, 2000; Heater, 1990). Republicans, such as Tocqueville (2004/1859) and Hobbes (1840/1691) argued that life in a political community serves to overcome human selfishness. Being critics of individualism, they suggested that individual rights are limited for the sake of the political community's well-being. Thus, like in Athenian citizenship, the *polis* is given priority over the individual. Rousseau (1994/1762) outlined three mechanisms through which the individual will gain freedom and equality: through the social contract that regulates citizens' rights and duties, the general will as a representation of the population's interests, and life as a virtuous citizen. He argued that the general will requires certain homogeneity among the citizenry: "The further the social bond is stretched; the weaker it gets (…)" (Rousseau, Book II, chapter 9). The republican perspective prioritises the community and life as a citizen over individual rights, claiming that the individual finds true emancipation and freedom only in the virtue of being a citizen and an active member of the political community. Citizenship provides the overarching identity for the individual and this identity is defined by the political community. However, this definition of citizenship ignores the pluralism that prevails in most societies.

To conclude, liberal and communitarian/republican approaches create an "irresolvable antinomy" (p.21) between citizenship and identity, promoting citizenship as 'universal' while it is actually tied to a particular identity (Isin and Wood, 1999). Isin and Wood (1999) claimed that civic republicanism conflates citizenship and identity, by referring to citizenship as an overarching 'master identity' (Mouffe, 1993) under which other identities (gender, race, class or culture) need to be subordinated. This weakens their relevance as a tool in the struggle for social justice. The next two sections examine theoretical approaches to national and multicultural citizenship in relation to identity and social justice.

## CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALISM

Faulks (2000) argued that the historical association between citizenship and nationality, emerging from the rise of nationalism in Europe, has blurred the boundaries between the

two. Nationalistic citizenship developed during the French revolution as a counter-hegemonic strategy. Inspired by the work of Rousseau, French revolutionaries fostered the connection between citizenship and nationality. In the aftermath of the French Revolution from 1789, the nation was established as a secular and progressive entity that would replace the monarch or feudal systems with the people as the sovereign and thus provide a new source of authority (Faulks, 2000). The revolution has yielded a notion of a nation as a political community, making it the source of state sovereignty and granting it the right of political self-determination. It led to the fusion of nation and state and thus redefined the relationship between citizenship, state, and nation as it culturalised citizenship (Faulks, 2000). Taylor (1994) conceptualised nationalism as providing an ethnic, linguistic, cultural or religious identity as the ground for political allegiance. To provide a source of authority and common identity, the nation was presented as an entity, united not only in common agency but also in terms of place, descent, and customs (Miller, 1995). The perception of the nation as having territorial boundaries resulted from the emergence of rival movements and the militarization in Europe (Faulks, 2000). This development gave rise to competing nationalisms, which defined themselves as distinct in some cultural or character traits (Miller, 1995).

Some theorists framed different forms of nationalism. Smith (1986; 1991) and Ignatieff (1993) conceptualised the dichotomy between ethnic and civic or territorial nationalism, drawing on earlier works by Friedrich Meinecke and Hans Kohn. In their work, civic nationalism is portrayed as a 'Western' concept, built on a historic territory, political participation, citizenship and civic education, whereas ethnic nationalism is associated with a focus on descent, a vernacular culture, and customs and depicted as non-Western. In trying to reconcile these forms of nationalism, Miller (1989; 1995; 1999) defined nationalism as promoting a common national identity that does not exclude the existence of different ethnic groups and their practices within this national culture. Yet, he asserted that the public culture is based on a set of common understandings, political principles, social norms, cultural ideals and a national language, which suggests a certain cultural homogeneity. Brubaker (1999) criticised these distinctions between different forms of nationalism since they seem to be driven by an ethnocentric view that portrays Western

nationalism as pioneering. The distinction between 'ethnic' and 'civic' remains ambiguous, as both refer to particular aspects of an assumed common culture and thus fall prey to essentialism, ignoring diversity and pluralism. All different forms of nationalism are marked by the same mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, leading Brubaker to conclude that different conceptions of nationalism are just *differently* inclusive and exclusive. Whether they rest on features of common descent or loyalty and patriotism for the nation's ideology and institution, they vary only in applying different criteria for inclusion and exclusion. Despite its exclusionary character, many theorists advocated for nationalistic citizenship such as Mill, who depicted a common nationality as necessary for a functioning democratic state and citizenship. Even contemporary theorists such as Miller (1989; 1995; 1999) and Smith (1995) still stress the need for a common nationality as the basis for citizenship.

Critics of this conflation between citizenship and nationality raised two major concerns: firstly, they questioned whether nationality is the only possible identity that can provide a bond with a community, as history has shown that religion and class, for example, can have a similar function (Faulks, 2000). Secondly, they doubted that national homogeneity, understood in ethnic or cultural terms can provide a basis for citizenship (Mouffe, 1992; Oommen, 1997); particularly in multicultural societies. This conflation can be dangerous since it is used to justify discrimination and exclusion of national minorities from citizenship rights. Consequently, nationalistic citizenship is a hegemonic strategy; a powerful resource to establish a group's domination as a nation. It serves to legitimise the nation's claims over a territory by building a body of history, symbols, and values that justify these claims, making it a powerful instrument of social closure (Brubaker, 1992).

## CITIZENSHIP AND DIFFERENCE

Given these limitations of national citizenship, some theorists have argued for a re-conceptualisation of citizenship that accommodates diversity (Benhabib, 1999; Kymlicka, 1995; Parekh, 2003; Young, 1989). This demand has framed various understandings of multicultural citizenship (Joppke, 2001). Most famously in his liberal theory of minority rights, Kymlicka (1995) fleshed out his concept of 'multicultural citizenship'. He did not

break with the idea that a bond is required between the individual and her or his community. On the contrary, he emphasised the importance of cultural membership as an expression of an individual's freedom. According to Kymlicka, the liberal ideal of free and equal individuals can be best realised within their own culture or nation. Yet, while values, cultural ideals, and history of majorities are usually constituted as the dominant culture, Kymlicka argued that national minorities should have equal rights of expression and access to their culture. As individual rights are not sufficient to guarantee justice, he demanded group-differentiated rights, such as the right to self-determination or self-governance for minorities.

Like Kymlicka, Young (1989; 1990) stated that oppressed groups need to be granted special mechanisms for recognition, effective representation and thus special rights. While both theorists revealed the flaws of apparent universal and neutral concepts of citizenship (Faulks, 2000), Kymlicka overlooked how the universalism promoted by liberal theory is pervaded by power structures, resulting in forms of domination and oppression (Isin and Wood, 1999; Young, 1989). Citizenship is defined in terms that favour a particular social identity, which minorities and feminists have identified as white, middle-class men (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Young argued that this can only be overcome through group differentiation and concepts of citizenship that do not assume the ideal of a just and equal society as their starting point but acknowledge the existence of power structures. She applied a different definition of social groups than Kymlicka, who framed minorities according to cultural and national affiliations. Like other theorists (Butler, 1993, Hall, 2000; Said, 1978), Young claimed that these common group attributes assume a false continuity, referring to their constructed character. Instead, she defined group differentiation not as fixed, but as multiple, cross-cutting and shifting, depending on oppression and privilege, which is reminiscent of the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989). This idea is also advocated by Benhabib (1999), who criticised Kymlicka's homogenous understanding of culture and his assumption that 'universalism' derives from 'Western' cultures. Instead, she argued for the need to go beyond essentialised notions of cultures and to build citizenship rights based on the hybridity and fluidity of identities and cultures (Benhabib, 1999).

The main argument of this section is that the definition of citizenship is part of a hegemonic struggle among different political groups. Citizenship has always been intertwined in power relations, which highlights the limits of liberal theory to achieve a fully reconciled society. This raises questions about how citizenship can be re-conceptualised so that it goes beyond the universal pretensions of nationalism and liberalism and becomes the "product of diversity rather than an instrument for dominant groups to 'accommodate' diversity" (Isin and Wood, 1999:69).

Responding to Spivak's 'strategic essentialism,' Gilroy advocated for "strategic universalism" (2000:220). Strategic universalism aims at going beyond the constructed categories of race, gender, and class and appeals to a common human dignity (Gilroy, 2000). Yet, as this section demonstrated, universalism is always at risk to be permeated by the most powerful particularisms.

Is there a way to define a concept of citizenship that is generous to the multiplicity of identities, without making them redundant in their struggle for social justice? While the thesis' purpose is not to answer this (important) question, it will remain in the background when examining the entanglements between citizenship education, identity, and hegemony in the next section and how citizenship education addresses questions of difference and justice. Perhaps this political question can be rephrased as an educational one, about how citizenship education can accommodate difference and a multiplicity of identities without compromising over its commitment to social justice.

## CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND IDENTITY

This section examines how identity is mediated through citizenship education against the backdrop of cultural hegemony. Like the concept of citizenship itself, literature from 'the West' tends to present the origins of citizenship education in the societies of ancient Greece and Rome and situates its modern development as part of nation-building. Yet, increasing demands for inclusion, rights and recognition by minority groups have challenged traditional forms of citizenship education. These demands led educators and

academics to formulate approaches to multicultural and anti-racist education, which have been partly implemented as policies. Yet, like the concept of citizenship itself, citizenship education is at risk of being undermined by cultural hegemony. Like citizenship, it can be a powerful tool of either domestication, using Freire's term, or of emancipation, as demanded by minorities and critical educators.

## WHAT IS CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Throughout history, citizenship education has taken different forms, depending on how a society envisioned its citizens to be. In 'the West,' it is often framed as originating from ancient Greece and Rome, where citizenship education was very militaristic and patriotic (Heater, 2004). With the decline of these societies, formal citizenship education retreated from schools and became understood as general education for socialisation instead of political education (Heater, 1990). During the upheaval of the French Revolution, Rousseau (1994/1762) and others demanded that schools should teach values that are beneficial to society and that citizenship education should regain its importance by being taught in schools to a wider public.

Since the 19th century, school systems were mainly controlled by the nation state and this period was underpinned by new doctrines of nationalism, liberal democracy, and socialism, from which new concepts of citizenship education emerged. However, Heater (1990) described that these ideologies were restrained by the interest of the national governments to maintain the established order. Therefore, the state tried to prevent teachers from transmitting political ideas and values that would threaten the current status quo and urged schools to instil a sense of national identity among the masses (Heater, 1990). Some school subjects like citizenship, geography or history promote national narratives, myths, and heroes that are intended to strengthen their citizens sense of belonging and their collective national identities (Anderson, 2006/1983; Nash et al., 1998; Phillips, 1998; Soysal, 2002). Thus, together with language teaching, these subjects were and remain important tools for homogenising and socialising mixed communities into a

national community. The nation state's control of education along with providing mass education for children was underlined by the purpose of institutionalising the nation state as the main entity to demand loyalty, against the competition with the churches and other sources of loyalty for national minorities (Heater, 1990). Therefore, historically the major role of citizenship and civic education has been to contribute to state formation by strengthening the sense of a common national identity, patriotism, and loyalty among its citizens (Green, 1990).

During the second half of the 20th century, potentially influenced by the impact of citizenship education in militaristic societies like Nazi-Germany and fuelled by minorities' demands for equal rights and inclusion (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000), citizenship education has been increasingly shaped by human rights, based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Tibbitts and Fernekes, 2011). This further exposed the need for democratic education, participation, and multicultural education to meet the demands of diverse societies. In the context of conflict societies, peace education has emerged as a field that claims to contribute to conflict resolution or conflict transformation. I will outline these educational trends and policies in the following and how they have impacted on citizenship education.

## CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION POLICIES

## CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND DIFFERENCE

Education for difference as a form of multicultural, cosmopolitan and global education developed as a response to accommodate diversity in modern-nation states, which still tend to prioritise the development of one mainstream national identity. The field of multicultural education is complex, ranging from conservative to radical approaches (Sleeter, 1989). Since these different approaches promote conflicting meanings of multiculturalism, multicultural education has emerged as "a terrain of struggle around the reformation of historical memory, national identity, self-and social representation, and the politics of difference." (Giroux, 1997: 246-47). McLaren (1995) mapped out these approaches to which he referred to as 'conservative or corporate multiculturalism', 'liberal

and left-liberal multiculturalism', and 'critical-resistance multiculturalism,' which are discussed in the following.

## CONSERVATIVE AND LIBERAL MULTICULTURALISM

Conservative or corporate multiculturalism has its roots in colonial colonialist attitudes (like Said (1978) described 'Orientalism') and constitutes itself on white supremacy, even though it professes to support equality (McLaren, 1995). Al-Haj (2002) framed this quite well in describing it as "a cover for an ideology of assimilation dominated by Whites", where minorities are grouped under an apparent common culture, which is dominated by "white" history, language and identity and where "whiteness" acts as the "invisible norm" (p.93).

Liberal and left-liberal approaches to multiculturalism differ from this conservative approach in a way that they recognise inequality between the majority population and minority groups (Al-Haj, 2002). While liberal multiculturalism places an emphasis on 'sameness', supposing that everyone can compete equally in a capitalist society and promotes an ethnocentric universalistic humanism, left-liberal multiculturalism sets the emphasis on difference (McLaren, 1995). Giroux (1997) argued that liberal multiculturalism is obsessed with the celebration of identities, tolerance, and developing communicative competences. Left-liberal multiculturalism also does not go beyond acknowledging difference, analysing cultural stereotypes, and the celebration of tolerance. Both liberal approaches individualise and psychologise issues of racism and social injustice, which are only addressed on a personal but not a political level (Giroux, 1997). Consequently, the concern about social justice is missing from these approaches to multiculturalism (Giroux, 1997), which tend to essentialise culture and ignore the historical and political situatedness of difference in injustice and oppression.

Critics of conservative and liberal multiculturalism illustrated this by policy examples from the United States and Britain. Prior to the civil rights struggle and ethnic revitalisation movements in the United States, citizenship education was dominated by an

assimilationist approach and exclusionist policies (Banks, 2004; Castles, 2004). Policies of assimilation have denied full citizenship to minorities (Giroux, 1997:247), whose interests, cultures, languages, and identities are not reflected by the proclaimed 'common' culture. While minorities in the United States and elsewhere have increasingly brought multicultural policies to the fore, they still feel alienated by the promotion of the national culture they cannot identify with or be part of. Banks (2008) suggested that national citizenship curricula can be a form of hegemony: "Mainstream citizenship education is grounded in mainstream knowledge and assumptions and reinforces the status quo and the dominant power relationships in society." (p.135).

The prioritisation of one national culture mostly happens at the expense of omitting histories, cultures, and identities of minorities and marginalised groups in official curricula (Banks, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2004; Osler and Vincent, 2002). Even though these curricula are presented as objective, value-free, colour-blind and as addressing all students, those who benefit from schooling and who can mostly identify with these curricula are usually white, middle-class students (Giroux, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 2005). Through her analysis of public policies in the United States, Ladson-Billings (1996) demonstrated that the social construct of race has been 'muted' by the paradigm of multiculturalism, which has become a rather mainstream approach of dealing with differences. She argued that by promoting an 'equality of difference,' multiculturalism obscures a critical analysis of race and the social reality of people of colour in the United States. Consequently, Banks (2004a) argued that there is a gap between democratic ideals in Western nations and the daily experiences of students in their schools since they are undermined by a white (Anglo-American) hegemony.

Similarly, in the United Kingdom, efforts have been made to integrate multicultural issues as part of the national citizenship curriculum (QCA, 1998). However, academics (Faulks 2006; Gilborn 2006; Osler 2003b) criticised the policy proposals[44], arguing that they fail

[44] The critics refer to the 'Crick report', published in 1998 by the 'Advisory Group on the Teaching of Citizenship and Democracy in schools'. The advisory group was charged with the task to develop educational responses to increasing concerns about racism. Another review was published in 2007, as the "Diversity and citizenship curriculum review" or 'Ajegbo Report' on the developments in

to adequately address issues of institutional racism, social exclusion, and discrimination. Gilborn (2006) critiqued that policies have failed to address institutional racism within the UK's education system. Racism has been framed as an interpersonal issue that is generally absent from British society. Osler (2009) argued that the curriculum encourages a "celebratory multiculturalism" (p.14), instead of a critical examination of diversity as a feature of democratic discourse. Similarly, Alibhai-Brown (2000; 2001) caricatured the model of British multiculturalism as "saris, samosas, and steel drums" which focuses on cultural characteristics of ethnic groups such as food or clothing and does not address more pressing issues of racism and collective identity. Young people are confronted with a choice between developing a national identity or aspects of European and global identity, but not given an alternative to seeing these identities as complementary (Osler, 2009).

These multicultural approaches feature a corporate aspect (McLaren, 1995), as they are linked to individual opportunities rather than directed towards social justice. Kymlicka (2004) described this as an elite form of multiculturalism, which he labels 'cosmopolitan multiculturalism' as opposed to 'domestic multiculturalism'. Whilst domestic multiculturalism stands for an education about the histories, identities, and cultures of minority groups to foster respect and justice in a common nation-state, cosmopolitan multiculturalism promotes studying international languages such as English and Chinese, which are influential in shaping the 'world culture' as enhancing individual opportunities and cultural capital (Kymlicka, 2004). Similarly, Bannerji (2000) drew on Althusser's terminology of the ideological state apparatus to explain how cosmopolitan or multicultural elites seek to reproduce themselves and their cultural capital under the guise of multiculturalism, cosmopolitan or global citizenship education.

citizenship education, which stated that citizenship education lacks contextualisation and continues to neglect issues of identity and diversity (Ajegbo et al., 2007).

In contrast, critical-resistance multiculturalism goes beyond these approaches and argues for a transformative political agenda as opposed to the accommodation of the status quo (McLaren, 1995). While conservative and liberal approaches treat cultural narratives and national history as fixed, critical approaches view representations of culture, race, and gender as the historical result of social struggles for power relations (Giroux, 1997). Giroux (1997) argued that insurgent or critical multiculturalism critically analyses and deconstructs the dominant culture and how it reproduces structural inequality. For example, it postulates that curricula are media that reproduce relations of inequality, domination, and oppression (Giroux, 1997). Consequently, reforming relations between cultures is not enough, since the meanings of these cultures and identities need to be transformed so that they promote social justice. In contrast, conservative approaches see multiculturalism with its diversity of identities and traditions as a "threat to democracy" (p.245) and ignore the need for a democratic society that constantly re-examines itself by promoting a form of dialogue among its critical and engaged citizens (Giroux, 1997).

Critical-resistance multiculturalism is closely connected to critical race theory (or antiracism, see Gilborn, 2004), which both deconstruct oppressive structures and reconstruct human agency of those who are oppressed under the current hegemonic system (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Ladson-Billings stated that critical race theory is sceptical about the civil rights agenda and liberal approaches to multiculturalism in education, claiming that white people have benefited most from these approaches to equality, which do not promote social change or challenge structural racism. Gilborn (2004) argued that antiracism or critical race theory in turn demand to identify and acknowledge that racism is deeply ingrained in socio-political and cultural structures of capitalist societies.

Some multicultural educators argued that multicultural and citizenship education should promote different layers of identity, such as local, national, global or cosmopolitan (Banks, 2008; Osler and Starkey, 2005). Osler and Starkey (2005) viewed cosmopolitanism for example as an extension of national and cultural identities: "Cosmopolitan citizens act locally, nationally and globally" (p.24). They claimed that

citizens should be encouraged to draw connections between their local, cultural, national, and global affiliations. This can foster their understanding of how these are interrelated and connected to matters of social justice and inequality (Banks, 2008; Lister, 1997; Nussbaum, 1996; Yuval-Davis, 1999). Consequently, multicultural education is also about learning knowledge, skills, and attitudes to function and participate across different local cultural communities and the global community (Banks, 2004; Castles, 2004).

Additionally, there is a need to validate and recognise minority identities and rights through multicultural education (Banks, 2004; 2008). This can happen for example through textbooks and materials that give voice to histories and experiences of minority groups or activities that provide a space to express these with the goal to enable minority students to develop positive cultural identities (Banks, 2008). Banks identified this as an important aspect of transformative citizenship since all students should develop an extensive and critical knowledge about their own and other communities. This allows them to understand how identity and culture are ingrained in political structures and how to advocate for justice and transformation (Banks, 2008). Through transformative citizenship education, students can critically embrace their identities and use them as a source of agency and possibility (Giroux, 1997). In sum, the major difference between conservative, liberal and critical multiculturalism is that only the latter allows an examination of identities in the context of privilege, oppression and social justice.

## CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AS POLITICAL EDUCATION

The degree of political participation of young people depends on the parameters of the political system they live in, particularly on how it defines citizenship and how inclusive it is towards young people. In ancient Greece, citizenship was based on the presumption that participation in public life was important for personal development (Heater, 1990), making it one of the important goals of citizenship education. Young people were trained in rhetorical skills and by attending public political discussions (Heater, 2004).

Nevertheless, they remained ‘citizens in waiting’ in this ancient society, where political participation was limited to male, privileged adults.

While the Convention on the Rights of the Child allocates participation rights to children that intend to allow them to have a more ‘active voice’ (UN, 1989), the entitlement to the full status of citizenship and associated political rights remain bound to a minimum age of 18 or 16 at best. Banks (2009) argued that the recognition of young people as citizens requires also a recognition of their participatory rights. Yet, in practice, young people’s political participation takes place mostly only in more informal processes through civil society or in the classroom. These informal processes are outlined in the following as the practice of democracy in classrooms, discussions of controversial issues, and the promotion of critical thinking.

## DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION

Citizenship education has been framed as serving two purposes: the development of the individual on the one hand and the needs of the democratic polity on the other hand (Heater, 1990). For example, Karl Mannheim (1970) described the task of schools as to prepare young people for a society with a democratic polity that is always changing. He claimed that such a society requires individuals with a democratic personality who can tolerate disagreement and take exposure to different opinions as a sign of personal enrichment. Mannheim saw this task as transcending the realm of the school since the school itself should be exposed to the democratic society, being an intermediary between the family and the state, preparing young people for societal life (Mannheim, 1970).

In similar terms, John Dewey (2014/1916) explained that democracy must devote itself to education as it requires individuals that are educated in a way to display voluntary disposition and interest in the democratic process. For Dewey, democracy is about maximising communication between individuals and groups, exposing them to different perspectives and point of views. His educational theory sought to incorporate both shared values that facilitate cooperation and the confrontation with contrasting point of views. In

his experiential approach to education, Dewey (1959) argued that democratic values and participation can only be internalised by students through promoting a democratic environment in schools: "all genuine education comes about through experience (…)" (Dewey, 1997/1938:25).

Like Dewey and Mannheim, Gutman argued that education for participation is essential to secure the society's democratic character: "Political education prepares citizens to participate in consciously reproducing their society, and conscious social reproduction is the ideal not only of democratic education but also of democratic politics (…)" (Gutman 1987:287).

Education plays a central role in democratic politics because it entails a form of 'conscious social reproduction': citizens must be empowered with the means to shape their own education. This education then provides the basis for the political values, attitudes, and behaviour of the future citizens. Gutman claimed that democracy and democratic education depend on each other, as democracy needs democratic education to unfold its moral strength and in turn, democratic education must be based on democratic principles. Disagreement and deliberation are an expression of freedom of democratic societies and schools that have the capacity and grounds to teach children to discuss disagreements (Gutman, 1987).

All these theorists refer to the idea of providing a space for the negotiation of different perspectives and disagreement, based on the principles of toleration and respect for different opinions. Allowing opportunities for debate and discussion of contested issues and topics that are politically divisive in the classroom is the most important aspect of democratic education (Osler and Starkey, 2006). Hess argued that discussions of controversial issue offer a pathway from issue discussion to political participation (Hess, 2004a; Hess and Avery, 2008). She defined 'discussion' as a form of dialogue and exchange of information; as a way for people to express their own ideas while being exposed to those of others. Public discussions and the inclusion of controversial issues in the school curriculum prepare young people for competent and meaningful political engagement (Hess and Avery, 2008). Others argued that discussions of controversial

issues also foster democratic values, such as tolerance, equality, and diversity (Oliver and Shaver, 1966), and that they prepare students to feel more comfortable addressing potential conflicts outside of the classroom (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002).

## CRITICAL THINKING

Another important aspect of political education is critical thinking (Banks, 2008; Johnson and Morris, 2010). While citizenship education traditionally focused on the promotion of patriotism, loyalty to the nation and a common identity; the concern to develop 'critical' citizens became increasingly incorporated into citizenship curricula around the world (Johnson and Morris, 2010). Yet, Banks (2008) contended that citizenship education, which teaches mainstream knowledge and focuses on maintaining the status quo, does not encourage critical thinking. Most policy documents provide a shallow form of critical thinking: for example, in England's curriculum guidance, critical thinking is described as "exploring, developing, evaluating and making choices" (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007). This definition of critical thinking differs from critical pedagogy, which seeks to empower the oppressed (and also the privileged) to critically reflect on dominant political and economic structures and to challenge the status quo (Freire, 1970). The major difference between these approaches towards critical thinking is that critical pedagogy is not only about thinking critically but also emphasises political thinking (Burbules and Berk, 1999).

This is reminiscent of Banks' (2008) approach to transformative citizenship, which challenges mainstream knowledge, advocates for positive changes, and seeks to bring voices of minorities to the fore (Banks, 2008). For Banks, this defines 'deeper' citizenship (see Clarke, 1996), as opposed to forms of citizenship that only concentrate on the legal requirements of rights and obligations but fail to challenge unequal socio-political structures and to encourage active participation. Transformative citizenship encourages political action to dismantle existing oppressing structures, even if this violates existing unjust laws (Banks, 2008).

Another aspect of political education is Human Rights Education (HRE). Similar to critical thinking, HRE can be approached in different ways, as this section will argue. HRE has not only become an important strand of citizenship education, but also a legal requirement according to international law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948 established HRE as a right for all as it provides that

> *(…) every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction. (UN Assembly 1948: Preamble).*

While this statement allocates a commitment of all member-states to HRE, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) manifests HRE also as an entitlement to all children (Osler, 2008). Yet, as Osler maintained, in practice there is a range of problems with the realisation of HRE for all children. For example, she referred to the tensions between HRE and citizenship education, since each suggests a different relationship between the individual and the state. Human rights claim universality that goes beyond citizenship rights, as they entitle all humans as rights-holders and maintain the adherence to these rights as the government's responsibility (UN Assembly, 1948). Osler (2008) framed this as a conflict since citizenship education usually does not encourage learners to be critical towards their government and fosters a sense of patriotism. HRE, however, appeals to the learner's awareness that the government can be held accountable to secure human rights (Osler, 2008). This critical aspect of HRE could empower learners to develop a more critical and reflective relationship towards their nation-state and to examine its democratic character carefully. Through this awareness of universal human rights, individuals are empowered to engage actively in demands for social justice (Osler and Starkey, 2005).

Moreover, HRE also conflicts with traditional citizenship education in terms of identity, as it demands that children from minority groups have the right to be exposed to these identities and cultures in addition to the dominant national identity. Article 29 of the CRC states the right of

> *[t]he development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own (UN 1989:29c).*

Whereas traditional national citizenship education focuses on the promotion of a common national identity, HRE is required to go beyond national identity by including the diversity of (national, cultural, and religious) identifications of children. Therefore, HRE can be an important part of political education that counterbalances nationalism and patriotism, since it points at the nation state's accountability to recognise individual and group rights.

However, it is important to keep in mind that the declaration of human rights, despite its symbolic importance, is not a powerful document in practice, as most governments violate human rights constantly without legal consequences (Isin and Wood, 1999). Isin and Wood (1999) explained that human rights are usually guaranteed through national citizenship, which does not secure the rights of minority groups. Thus, Kobayashi (1993) stated that like most policies, this document is full of rhetoric without contributing to minorities' struggle for equality.

## CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND CONFLICT

Davies (2004) identified education as an important means for peace-building in conflict and post-conflict societies. Therefore, addressing the conflict and peace is a central feature in citizenship education in conflict-affected societies. Again, there are different approaches to conflict as part of citizenship education and some are at risk of being undermined by the cultural hegemony that sustains the status quo and can prevent the critical examination of conflict.

The parameters and content of peace education vary across different contexts, yet usually, they aim to promote certain values such as justice, tolerance, equality and human rights among others (Bar-Tal, 2002). Chapter one outlined the educational policies or activities in Northern Ireland and Israel that are based on contact theory (Allport, 1954), where students from different backgrounds meet or study together, either in activities, lessons or integrated and bilingual schools. Whereas negative contact is seen as strengthening stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination, contact theory postulates that positive contact under conditions of equal status, common goals and institutional support, can foster positive attitudes between different groups (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1971; Stephan and Stephan, 2001).

However, critical social psychologists (Dixon et al., 2005) and educationalists (Bekerman, 2002; 2005; 2016; Connolly, 2000) have pointed at the limitations of these encounters in the realities of divided societies. While Dixon et al. (2005) acknowledged that these encounters might work under the conditions created by the researchers, they represent a utopia that does not resemble people's everyday life realities. Ethnographic studies that investigated the perception of 'the other' (Bekerman, 2002; 2005; 2016; Connolly, 2000), illustrate how participants' constructions of themselves and 'the enemy' are embedded in complex socio-political structures and the particular context. Thus, they argued that these perceptions cannot simply be explained through 'psychological' processes of stereotyping and individual prejudice. For example, Bekerman (2005) demonstrated how bilingual environments in Israel are undermined by dominant political structures, which clearly prioritise one language (Hebrew) over the other (Arabic), imposing on the (Arabic-speaking) minority language assimilation as a requirement for educational success. Thus, Connolly (2000) and Dixon et al. (2005) have argued that these encounters based on the contact hypothesis distract from the more salient issues by concentrating on individual prejudice as the major reason for conflict, ignoring its wider political and economic

structures. Therefore, if policies are based solely on the theoretical framework of contact, they might be ideologically exploited by those in whose interests it is to cover up institutional racism, injustice or other inequalities (Dixon et al., 2005).

Other forms of peace education seek to enable participants to take the perspective of the 'adversary' group and to learn to view their perspective as legitimate, including their narratives, memories, and identities (Bar-Tal and Rosen, 2009; Salomon, 2004). Bar-Tal and Rosen (2009) claimed that to promote reconciliation, a new 'common' account of the past needs to be developed and the image of the former 'opponent' needs to be accepted as a human being with equal rights. Yet, they also noted that to be effective, peace education needs to be embedded in a broader framework of societal change (Bar-Tal and Rosen, 2009). Such an approach that goes beyond the individualisation and psychologisation of conflict is discussed in the following.

## CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Conflict transformation could provide a broader societal framework to address the conflict. Among other theorists, Lederach (1995) framed the term conflict transformation, which he intentionally differentiated from the more established terms of conflict management and conflict resolution. Whereas the former seeks to contain the conflict and achieve compromise (Bloomfield and Reilly, 1998), the latter aims to find constructive outcomes that are acceptable to all parties without having the parties to sacrifice their fundamental needs (Azar and Burton, 1986). Lederach (2014) criticised both approaches for their tendency to "cover up" (p.9) the conflict or to suggest that there are pragmatic solutions to the complex issue of conflict. While conflict resolution offers short-term relief, focusing on de-escalation and the content of the problem, conflict transformation provides a long-term approach, focusing on the context and relationship patterns of the conflict and admits that escalation to a certain degree might be necessary for constructive change (Lederach, 2014). This view is also shared by Davies (2004) who argued that peace

education requires exposure to conflict, by encountering opposing views and narratives from 'the other side'.

Thus, the conflict transformation approach poses further challenges for peace education. Zembylas (2007) maintained that it is difficult for students and teachers to discuss reconciliation, where the remnants of the conflict still have emotional implications for them. He called this "the politics of trauma" (p.208), referring to the collective memory of fear, hatred, victimisation, and dehumanisation within these societies. The politics of trauma creates challenges by how past events related to the conflict are remembered and narrated and the need to critically evaluate these narratives (Zembylas, 2007). Consequently, due to the challenges of dealing with and questioning these emotions, Bar-Tal (2002) stated that while peace education commits itself to promote positive change, there is a danger that controversial issues might be avoided. This presents one of the major challenges for citizenship education in conflict-affected societies, since discussing controversial issues related to identities and narratives of the conflict are a crucial part of democratic education (see Hess, 2004a) and peace education, as argued above.

Consequently, Salomon (2011) claimed that peace education is more likely to take place on the individual or interpersonal level through the development of peace-related values and contact with 'the other'. Yet, this does not affect social or political structures that are built on the legacy of the conflict (Salomon, 2011). Therefore, as Bekerman and Zembylas (2012) maintained, peace education tends to ignore power relations and structural problems that continue to institutionalise social injustice. Approaches to peace education have been mostly guided by functionalist, psychologised and often idealist perspectives, following the 'Western' tradition and have largely ignored the importance of power relations (one can argue that this is also true for approaches to human rights education, multicultural education, and democratic education) (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012). They claimed that the understanding of peace in the 'Western' tradition is essentialised and thus problematic as it treats the 'solution' to difference (as the underlying force for conflict) as either assimilation or destruction, disregarding structural problems that institutionalise social injustice (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012). Following the ideas of

post-colonial theorists, this is not surprising since Western colonial powers sought to replace one hegemony with the other, for example, the hegemony of imperial powers with those of the nation state. Bekerman and Zembylas (2012) argued that Western colonial powers have homogenised peace and reconciliation instead of acknowledging their complexity and their situatedness in a certain context shaped by political power structures. Since they are sites through which ideologies are mediated, schools cannot be viewed as neutral arenas in modern nation states (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012), and thus also not in terms of the conflict. They concluded that peace education is a "universal utopia" (p.27), which is at odds with diverse and sometimes conflicting representations of truth and justice in conflict-affected societies (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012). Consequently, this raises the question whether citizenship education can contribute to conflict transformation in Northern Ireland and Israel.

## CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION ALONG THE SPECTRUM

Some theorists have placed different approaches to citizenship education on a spectrum, from passive to active forms (Kerr, 2000), or from minimal to maximal approaches (McLaughlin, 1992). Kerr (2000) and McLaughlin (1992) also sought to locate the terms of 'civic education' and 'citizenship education' along this spectrum, where the former frames a rather passive and technical concept, equipping the citizen with values, identifications, and knowledge to become a member of the community, whereas the latter is directed at broader, participatory and critical understandings of citizenship. I will describe this spectrum in the following by incorporating the different approaches to citizenship education theory and policies that were discussed above.

### PASSIVE CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION OR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FOR DOMESTICATION

Passive or minimal forms of citizenship education are described as largely content and teacher-led, knowledge-based, providing little opportunity for student participation and initiative (Kerr, 2000); as well as teaching 'technical' knowledge about the government and history of the country (Torney-Purta et al., 1999; McLaughlin, 1992). Following critical multicultural or antiracist educators (Banks, 2008; Gilborn, 2006; Giroux, 1997,

1980; Ladson-Billings, 2005), a passive approach teaches unreflectively about national identity, patriotism, and loyalty as a manifestation of the majority population's privilege while marginalising minority groups' identities, histories, and political interests. This form of citizenship education promotes ideologies that try to present private interests as the public good and to establish their ideas as universal truths (Giroux, 1980; 1984). McLaughlin (1992) described a passive form of citizenship education as an "unreflective socialisation into the political and social status quo" (p.238) and Kerr (1999) as promoting interests of political and economic elites.

The increasing influence of neoliberalism on educational policies led to a depoliticisation of citizenship education in capitalist societies, which became incorporated in a culture of positivism and marketisation (Giroux, 1980). Marketisation defines the new official knowledge or common-sense in education (Apple, 2004). Kilkauer (2015) referred to a culture of managerialism as a similar trend that increasingly permeates public institutions such as schools, running them like corporations.

Giroux (1997) argued that policies, infused with conservative liberal multiculturalism are grounded in excessive individualism and a competitive ethic. Issues of structural racism and poverty are individualised and minorities are seen as responsible for their own success or 'failure' (Giroux, 1997). Examples of these educational policies are the promotion of choice, the focus on enhancement of test scores, the re-privatisation and deregulation of schools, nationalisation, and standardisation of the curriculum and literacy.

The conservative and liberal establishment advertises these policies as guarantors for equality (Giroux, 1997). Consequently, Giroux (1997) claimed that citizenship is privatised and individualised, empty of political obligations and commitments to social justice and transformation since this would threaten current power relations and the privileges of the (usually white, male) upper classes. Political and economic elites prefer to define citizenship as an act of altruism or philanthropy instead of social responsibility, masking problems of white racism and social justice through the "celebration of choice and the logic of the market" (Giroux, 1997:241). By glossing over institutional and systematic issues of racism and inequality and locating them in the context of personal

prejudice, citizenship education is reduced to a tool for stability and control (Gilborn, 2006), providing only a "false generosity" (Freire, 1970:45) to marginalised groups. As a result, passive approaches to citizenship education are infused with cultural hegemony that secures the status quo and reproduces a form of education for domestication (Freire, 1970).

### ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION OR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FOR EMPOWERMENT

In contrast, it is argued that active forms of citizenship education not only seek to inform students but also build their capacity to participation and interaction with other students through debates and discussions (Kerr, 2000). They seek to promote critical understanding and questioning, nourishing a concern for and commitment to social justice among young people (McLaughlin, 1992). Debates and discussions of controversial and politically divisive topics are an important aspect of active citizenship education since they foster democratic values and prepare young people for competent and meaningful political engagement (Hess, 2004b; Hess and Avery 2008; Oliver and Shaver, 1966; Osler and Starkey, 2006). Yet, how can citizenship education nourish dialogue and democracy if it is itself subject to domination and manipulation? How can young people be critical citizens when the banking concept turns them into "receiving objects" (Freire, 1970:77)?

Critical educators (Apple, 2004; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1997; McLaren, 1995) have demanded that political education and thus citizenship education needs to reflect critical pedagogy. They argued that education should enable learners to deconstruct dominant ideologies that underpin the status quo and assess them against their demands for social justice. McLaren (1995) formulated this aptly by stating that justice does not simply exist because it is inscribed in our laws, such as in constitutions or the declaration of human rights, instead it needs to be constantly reassessed and struggled for.

In terms of identity, critical multiculturalists and advocators of critical race theory/antiracism urged a critical analysis of the construction of different identities through race, class, culture, and gender (Banks, 2008; Giroux, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 2005). They also demand that citizenship education needs to go beyond mainstream

narratives of the nation, its history and culture and allow the exploration of alternative identifications, narratives, and histories. In this way, it includes the right of minorities to have their cultures, narratives, and identities included in addition to those of the majority.

In societies scarred by conflict, political generosity can enable a discussion with people who have different or opposing views. Emerson (2012) defined political generosity as "the ability to legitimise the cultural and political identity of those with opposing views" (2012:290), which she based on the condition of having confidence in one's own cultural and political identity and in the right of others to hold these views. Yet, this also includes criticality towards one own's identity, culture, and narratives. Related to this, Banks (1994) and Jenks et al. (2001) claimed that the development of cross-cultural competency involves "the critical examination of one's own beliefs and values regarding culture, race, and social class; and an understanding of how knowledge, beliefs, and values determine one's behaviour with respect to minority groups." (Jenks et al., 2001:88). 'Political generosity' can be set in opposition to "false generosity" (Freire, 1970:45), promoted by passive citizenship education that facilitates a subtle control of the oppressed through imposing notions of citizenship, identity and conflict that act as empty signifiers and fail to challenge the current status quo and system of advantage. Knowledge and confrontation with other perspectives, narratives about the conflict and other political identities can enhance the capacity for political generosity (Emerson, 2012).

Therefore, such an educational approach treats identities as products of their political and historical contexts and allows a reconceptualisation of identity as a fluid and changing idea that is connected to power relations (Hall, 2000).

Giroux argued that a critical perspective on citizenship education

> *(...) not only situates the relationship between schools and other social institutions in a basically political framework, but it also makes problematic the very nature of citizenship itself. It provides the basis for analysing how a given conception of what it means to be a citizen is conveyed through the dominant rationality in a given social order. Thus, it calls into question not simply what the school claims it does, but what in fact schools may unintentionally do as institutions that exist in*

> *a particular relationship with the state. The nature of their relationship, of course, is contained in one of the fundamental questions at the heart of any notion of citizenship education (1980:334).*

Thus, active approaches to citizenship education encourage a critical examination of the concept of citizenship and citizenship education itself.

HRE, democratic education, participation, and multicultural education all consist of critical aspects with potential for empowering citizenship education. These critical aspects could re-define young people as critical democratic citizens, who are invited to explore their identities in relation to dominant structures of inequality and oppression and to realise their demands through active participation. Part of this process of transformation includes the reclamation of identities by the oppressed to become "beings for themselves" (p.161) and by the privileged to critically examine their own identities in the politico-historical context (Freire, 1970). As opposed to the 'common-sense' promoted by minimal or passive forms of citizenship education, this approach relates to Gramsci's (1929/1971) idea of 'good sense', nourishing a critical consciousness that dismantles hegemonic structures and provides a basis for counter-hegemonic action.

## CONCLUSION

This Chapter linked the critique of the educational approaches and policies that underpin citizenship to the theoretical framework of cultural hegemony. It revealed the hegemonic character of these policies, which are influenced by the marketisation, individualisation, and psychologisation of citizenship and conflict. The review of the literature proposes two key arguments: firstly, citizenship education reproduces a 'common-sense' that masks itself as neutral, apolitical, colour and culture-blind. It rephrases issues of inequality and racism as the responsibility of the individual while breaking the link between injustice and ideologies promoted by political and economic elites.

Part of this hegemonic strategy that underpins citizenship education is to essentialise meanings of identity, culture, and difference. Conservative and liberal multiculturalism

employ assimilationist or exclusionist strategies to citizenship, which promote for example a sense of 'Americanness' or 'Britishness' that is in fact dominated by white, upper-class and male perspectives. The analysis of citizenship curricula and policies in other contexts demonstrated how the cultural capital is shaped by the culture and knowledge of the privileged (white and upper-class) population (Banks, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2004; 2005; Osler and Vincent, 2002). These approaches deliberately overlook dimensions of power, domination, and oppression that are running through the history of Western nation states. In Northern Ireland and Israel, citizenship education is framed as a response to division and difference. Yet, this Chapter discussed how education systems and policies are infused by cultural hegemony that maintains the privilege of political and economic elites and secures the status quo. The first Chapter outlined citizenship education in Northern Ireland and Israel and concluded that whilst it has the potential to provide a structural explanation of conflict and division to learners, it is at risk to be undermined by political (hegemonic) interests.

Secondly, drawing on Laclau, these 'passive' forms of citizenship education promote 'a particular' disguised as 'a universal', through terms such as equality, human rights, democracy, and peace. The previous section outlined how these concepts can become empty signifiers in the face of cultural hegemony. Therefore, cultural hegemony can dilute the meaning of these important concepts (equality, democracy and human rights), by offering a "false generosity" (Freire, 1970:45) to marginalised groups to silence their struggle and to discourage criticality and transformation also among the majority population. The dominance of identity politics and neoliberalism might prevent a critical examination of the conflict, racism, and sectarianism, as this would jeopardise the status quo. When citizenship education is framed in the language of individual prejudice and responsibility, it fails to address broader issues of social justice.

What does this mean for citizenship education in divided and conflict-affected societies? The thesis seeks to explore how citizenship education is practised in the classroom and how the concepts of citizenship, identity and the conflicts are understood by teachers and students. Chapter one argued that educational policies in Northern Ireland and Israel sidestep addressing structural explanations of conflict, racism, and sectarianism.

Additionally, in Israel, the curriculum is increasingly dominated by a national-religious ideology. These observations inform the first research question, which examines how cultural hegemony is expressed through the citizenship curricula in both societies.

This Chapter outlined how cultural hegemony is transmitted through schools as sites of cultural reproduction (Apple, 2004; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Cultural reproduction is ensured through the distribution of cultural capital in schools, which is infused with the interests of political and economic elites (Apple, 2004). Cultural hegemony is exercised on other groups by setting the acquirement of cultural capital as a requirement for educational success. However, this Chapter also argued that some aspects of citizenship education, such as critical thinking, (critical) multiculturalism, education for democracy and human rights have an emancipatory potential. This raises the second research question of how schools in Northern Ireland and Israel respond to the citizenship education policies. The context of division and discrimination[45] in both societies also prompts to examine whether Catholic and Protestant, Arab-Palestinian and Jewish-Israeli schools deal differently with these policies.

While the citizenship curricula in Northern Ireland and Israel state to promote community relations and tolerance (Ministry of Education, 2001; CCEA, 2007), the previous Chapter suggested that the curricula are at risk from being diluted by identity politics, individualisation and psychologisation of conflict (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012; McEvoy, 2007; Pinson, 2011). These processes can prevent a critical examination of the conflict, racism, and sectarianism. This concern informs the third research question of whether and how citizenship education can contribute to conflict transformation in these societies.

[45] I am referring to the historical discrimination of the Catholic population in Northern Ireland. In Israel, the Arab-Palestinian population experiences structural discrimination through unequal legal treatment (see for example Adalah, 2017).

# CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

## INTRODUCTION

This Chapter outlines the methodology and describes the data collection and analysis. Additionally, it discusses the limitations of the methodological approach and includes a reflection on how my personal background has affected the data collection and the interpretation of the data.

The previous Chapter concluded with a discussion of the research questions. For reasons of clarity, I start with a repetition of the research questions, which have also informed my methodological decisions. This study seeks to fill the gap of research on how citizenship education is practised and interpreted in classrooms in a conflict-affected and a post-conflict society. Part of the study is concerned with examining how citizenship education is interpreted in the educational policies. Thus, the first research question explores:

1. *How is cultural hegemony expressed through the overt and covert citizenship curricula in Northern Ireland and Israel?*

Moving from the policy-level to the institutional-level, the second research question examines processes of cultural reproduction and resistance among different groups in divided societies:

2. *How do different schools in Northern Ireland and Israel respond to the citizenship education policies?*

The last research question focuses on the connection between citizenship education and conflict:

3. *How can citizenship education contribute to conflict transformation?*

The first research question draws on individual interviews with policymakers and policy documents. The second and third research question concentrate on the contexts of the four different schools (Catholic, Protestant, Arab-Palestinian, Jewish-Israeli), exploring how

teachers and students understand citizenship education policies, the concepts of citizenship and identity and how they analyse the conflict.

## A COMPARATIVE CROSS-CULTURAL CASE STUDY

Two major goals guided this study: firstly, it seeks to explore the workings of cultural hegemony through citizenship education and therefore requires a broader perspective, by examining phenomena at different levels (policy, institutional, individual). Secondly, the subtle nature of cultural hegemony requires an in-depth exploration of processes of meaning-making by studying interpretations of concepts such as citizenship, racism or conflict. Consequently, I approached the research as a case study, which is an investigation of substantial depth of one or a few cases (Gomm et al., 2000), and as comparative and cross-cultural research that explores phenomena across different cultural contexts. Below, I outline this combined approach.

In a case study, a phenomenon is studied in detail and in a particular context by exploring different perspectives (Ritchie et al., 2003). Yin (2003) argued that case studies offer a good framework to investigate 'how' and 'why' questions as they require a deeper understanding of the context and how people make sense of a phenomenon. This approach is holistic in a sense that it relies on multiple sources of evidence (for example observations, interviews, documents) and that prior theoretical prepositions guide the data collection and analysis (Yin, 2003). Moreover, case studies are characterised by rich descriptions of the real-life context and set a focus on narratives, events, contexts or phenomena (Cohen et al., 2011).

Critics of case study research have maintained that it does not allow for generalisation, as it narrows the research to specific contexts (Yin, 2003). However, Yin defended that the goal of case studies is not a statistical but analytical generalisation, which seeks to expand theory. Theory-building can be supported since common conclusions from different cases can be more powerful than those deriving from a single case (Yin, 2003). Thus, the study of multiple cases allows exploring deeper reoccurring problems across cases (Stake,

1995). Similarly, Bryman (2012) stated that a comparison can provide a better understanding of a phenomenon by comparing it to a case that is similar or contrasting. A comparison can derive more solid findings by increasing the researcher's sensitivity and awareness of the particularities of a specific context (Bryman, 2012; Ritchie et al., 2003).

As an extension of this, a cross-cultural comparative study examines a certain phenomenon in different countries (Hantrais, 1995). Hantrais (1995) outlined that the nature of the phenomenon is explored in different cultural settings by using the same research methods with the goal to gain a deeper understanding of these settings and to uncover explanations for similarities and differences. Comparative cross-cultural research provides tools for understanding and uncovering complex meanings, emphasising the 'situatedness' of phenomena (McNess, 2004). Hantrais (1995) maintained that comparisons allow gaining "fresh" insights and deeper understandings while they also often help to identify gaps in knowledge (p.4).

Stake (2011) and Bryman (2012) raised concerns about comparisons, arguing that they can distract from contextual insights and rich descriptions. However, in combination with a case study approach, a comparative case study can benefit from both the advantages of a comparison and the holistic and detailed understanding of case study research. A comparative case study allows for a "thick description" (p.174), while its goal remains to illuminate contrasts, similarities and patterns across different cases (Campbell, 2010). Therefore, it addresses the study's two goals of providing a broader perspective across contexts and different levels, while exploring in-depth processes of meaning-making.

## A QUALITATIVE APPROACH: EPISTEMOLOGY AND ONTOLOGY

Whilst quantitative research focuses on the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables and probability samples, qualitative research seeks to answer questions concerned with how social experience is created and given meaning (Ritchie et al., 2003; Bryman, 2012). The theoretical framework of this study and the framing of research questions as 'how' questions that explore meaning-making processes,

suggest a qualitative approach. The theoretical framework of cultural hegemony and post-colonial theories of identity draw on social constructivism and are at odds with positivism that underpins quantitative research (Bryman, 2012). In contrast, qualitative research can illuminate processes that establish common-sense through power structures (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007); and therefore provides the means to explore cultural hegemony. Below, I will outline the qualitative approach of this study, which is guided by worldviews of constructivism, critical theory, interpretivism and a participatory paradigm. This will further elaborate on the connection between the theoretical framework, the research questions, and the qualitative approach.

## SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM AND CRITICAL THEORY

This study draws on the paradigms of critical theory and constructivism as both are inter-related, while also complementing the theoretical framework of cultural hegemony. Constructivism views reality as socially constructed, concluding that common-sense knowledge about the world emerges from social interactions between people (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Schütz, 1962). Critical theory sees reality as shaped by the historical context and influenced by social, political and economic values (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). Both perspectives oppose traditional positivist views, which portray reality as 'being out there' and instead they frame reality as the result of a particular context. As the previous Chapter proposed, critical theory is concerned with issues of power and justice and illuminates how social systems, institutions, and structures are based on ideologies and constructions of gender, race, and class (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000).

Qualitative research can provide better understandings of asymmetrical power relations, by going beyond mainstream perspectives and exploring the complexities of individual social realities (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). Setting the focus on different perspectives, qualitative research often explores people's narratives, biographical stories and life- and oral histories (Legard et al., 2003). It addresses claims raised by critical race theory/antiracism that worlds are not fixed but constructed of words, narratives, and silences, which can be used to write and challenge against unjust social arrangements

(Ladson-Billings, 2003). In sum, social constructivism provides a theoretical basis to explore how individuals make sense out of their reality and how they understand concepts such as citizenship or racism. Critical theory analyses these concepts in the context of power relations, bringing their underlying ideologies to the fore.

Constructivists and critical theorists see knowledge as created through social interactions and interpretations by individuals (Berger and Luckman, 1966; Habermas, 1973). Their view of reality implies that the qualitative researcher can only interpret phenomena through the meanings that other people attach to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011) since the world is not immediately knowable for the researcher (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Flick, 2014). Therefore, constructivism and critical theory rely on an interpretivist methodology, which approaches human experience through interpretation (Blumer, 1969), by examining perspectives, descriptions, and accounts of the social world by the participants (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Bryman, 2012; Garfinkel, 1967). The critical hermeneutical tradition maintains that there is only interpretation instead of 'objective' facts as positivism postulates (Kincheloe et al., 2000). From this perspective, research is not a value-free process but influenced by the researcher's perspective and interpretation of participants' accounts (Kincheloe, 1991).

### THE PARTICIPATORY PARADIGM

The *participatory paradigm* emerged as an extension of the orientations of the constructivist and the critical theory paradigm (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). Heron and Reason (1997) referred to critical inter-subjectivity, which the individual develops through the exchange with others, through dialogue and co-creation of knowledge (Heron and Reason, 1997). They proposed a form of collaborative inquiry as a methodology, promoting "research *with* people" (p.9) instead of research *of* people (Heron and Reason, 1997). From the view of interpretivism, action can be a meaningful outcome of the inquiry process, whilst critical theory, constructivism, and the participatory paradigm all emphasise a call to action (Lincoln and Guba, 2000).

Participatory action research is the reasonable expansion of this approach as it seeks to promote a critical consciousness among oppressed groups and to empower them to challenge dominant constructions of knowledge (McIntyre, 2007; Reason and Bradbury, 2008). I planned initially to recruit a group of young people as research advisors (Kellet, 2011; Lundy and McEvoy, 2012), which represents a 'deeper' participatory approach (Cahill, 2007). However, constrained by access to participants and time, I decided to follow a more pragmatic approach towards participation (for a more detailed explanation of the limitations of access and time see section 'Access and time').

Hart (1992) and Cahill (2007) explained that participatory research consists of a variety of practices and can take place at different levels of participation. Despite the constraints, I still attempted to draw on a participatory approach. Participation took place on a 'lower' level following Hart's (1992) 'ladder of participation'. Thus, the study approached participation as the consultation of participants on their views regarding educational policies that affect them. Related to this, the purpose of group interviews and activities was also to encourage interpretation and reflection among young participants (Hart, 1992). While this approach does certainly not meet the demands of participatory action research, a lower degree of participation was still of value in terms of allowing a space for participants to reflect on matters of social justice, to voice their views on these matters and to engage in dialogue. Huffman (2013) also argued for smaller, more actionable, and pragmatic participatory methodologies that still explore matters of social justice, meaningful action and endeavour mutuality in research.

### LIMITATIONS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Critics of qualitative research argued that it lacks 'scientific rigour', reproducibility and generalisability and is permeated by researcher bias (Bryman, 2012; Mays and Pope, 1995). However, these weaknesses can also be regarded as strengths of qualitative research, which is described as in-depth, focused on context (Bryman, 2012), and as considering researchers' baggage (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Kincheloe, 1991). Importantly, qualitative research does not aim for generalisation of findings but of theory

(Mitchell, 1983; Yin, 2003). Nevertheless, this also implies that a qualitative study is limited due to its focus on the specific contexts, the biographies of the participants and the researcher and its focus on theory building.

Qualitative researchers further responded to this criticism by arguing that the same criteria that are applied for evaluating quantitative research cannot be applied to qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; LeCompte and Goetz, 1982; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed the alternative criteria of 'trustworthiness' and 'authenticity'. I sought to address 'trustworthiness' by providing multiple accounts of social reality through triangulation, a thick description of the context of each school (in the appendix) and the societies, by keeping records of the data and by including a reflection on my own background and how it has influenced the study. I attempted to ensure the 'authenticity' of the study by including different contexts and viewpoints from each identity group and the field of education (policy, institutional, individual). Additionally, I incorporated a participatory element into the study, which sought to encourage participants to reflect on issues of social justice. It is hoped that the detailed descriptions provided in this Chapter assist the reader to assess this qualitative study with its limitations and strengths.

## DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

Flick (2014) explained that qualitative research tends to draw on multiple methods. This allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena in question and offers an alternative to validation as a criterion in quantitative research. Since individuals cannot give full explanations of their experiences, it is only possible to collect 'puzzle pieces' of experiences and stories (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). A multi-method approach allows for triangulation, to study the same phenomenon through different research methods (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007), in different places and with different people (Denzin, 1989). Another advantage is that a variety of methods can serve to stimulate and maintain the interest of the participants (Greene and Hill, 2005). Before I will introduce the reader

to the methods I have used, I will describe and justify the choice of the sample because it has also influenced the choice of research methods.

## SAMPLE

In case study research, cases are selected based on which case will lead to a better understanding of the inquiry at hand (Stake, 1995). The case study of separate schools in the context of two divided societies is used instrumentally to understand how citizenship education is understood and practised in these contexts (Stake, 1995). Two divided societies based on their common history of conflict were selected to gain a broader perspective on the state of citizenship education in conflict-affected societies. Yet, the contexts of Northern Ireland and Israel experience different levels of violence and vary in their progress in terms of power-sharing and peace agreements. This difference can shed light on how citizenship education is dealt with differently in a conflict-ridden (Israel) and post-conflict society (Northern Ireland). To address the first research question of how cultural hegemony is expressed through the citizenship curricula, I have interviewed policymakers from governmental and non-governmental bodies [46] in the area of citizenship education. Participants were selected based on their different national-cultural-religious background (Catholic, Protestant, Arab-Palestinian, and Jewish-Israeli) to include perspectives from each identity group by keeping the ratio even (I did not categorise the participants according to one specific national or religious identity to respect their overlapping and intersecting identities. Instead I selected them based on their affiliation to a certain organization and their expertise). Thus, in Northern Ireland I interviewed one policymaker from CCEA, one from CCMS, one from TRC, one from the Ministry of Education and one policymaker who was involved in the curriculum development. In Israel, I interviewed current and former policymakers from the Ministry

[46] Policymakers were selected from the Ministry of Education (Israel), the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) and from organisations and institutions that are involved in the development of curriculum material or the provision of teacher training.

of Education, the pedagogic council (Dirasat) and the Academic Committee for Civics Instruction. This was supported by the analysis of policy documents such as the citizenship curriculum, textbook, guidance for teachers, and legal documents.

The second research question refers to how schools respond to the citizenship education policies. I have selected one Catholic, Arab-Palestinian, Protestant and Jewish-Israeli school, based on the following criteria: their different affiliation regarding identity; their similarity in terms of location (urban or sub-urban) and finally their adherence to the official citizenship curriculum. While I adhered to these criteria during the selection process of the schools, the choice of schools was rather pragmatic due to constraints that are outlined in the "Challenges and limitations" section in this chapter (see page 122-4). It has been argued that decisions regarding sample selection have often to be made along pragmatic considerations such as time and resources (Ritchie et al., 2003). The case study of each school comprised its physical environment and its population. In each school, I conducted individual interviews with teachers and the principal, observations of citizenship lessons and focus group interviews with the students. The third research question about whether citizenship education can contribute to conflict transformation was explored through interviews with participants who are involved or experience citizenship education at the policy, school, and individual level.

In terms of age and year group among the students, I tried to keep both features consistent across the two contexts. Yet, I needed to consider that in Northern Ireland, Local and Global Citizenship (LGC) is taught at Key stage three and four, whereas, in Israel, civic education is usually taught between year 10 and 12. At the Jewish- Israeli school the students already studied a subject called 'Humanities'[47] in year 9, which is similar to citizenship education. Consequently, I conducted group interviews in this school with students from year 9 as well and indicated this in the interpretation of the data. Generally, most students were recruited from year 9 and 10 (key stage three) in Northern Ireland and from year 10 till 12 in Israel. Therefore, the students in Israel (except for two focus groups

[47] According to the school's website, "Humanities" covers a mix of topics such as literature, history and culture in Israel.

at the Jewish-Israeli school) were generally two years older than the students in Northern Ireland.

Consequently, the sampling selection process was purposeful, since the comparative case studies were chosen based on the assumption that the study of these four cases can provide the richest and broadest information. Two different contexts and four different schools were chosen to achieve demographic variation through different identity groups (Sandelowski, 1995), and due to their political importance as conflict-affected societies (see Patton, 2002).

The table below summarises the number of interviews and participants in each context. The data in Northern Ireland was collected from May 2016 until October 2016 (only one additional interview was conducted in January 2017) and in Israel from October 2016 until December 2016.

**FIGURE 1 OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWS AND PARTICIPANTS**

| **Northern Ireland** | | | **Israel** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Interviews | Participants | | Interviews | Participants |
| Policymakers | 6 | 6 | Policymakers | 6 | 6 |
| Principals | 1 | 1 | Principals | 2 | 2 |
| Teachers | 4 | 4 | Teachers | 4 | 4 |
| Students (year 9-10) | 8 | 35 | Students (year 9-12) | 9 | 32 |
| **Total** | **19** | **46** | **Total** | **21** | **44** |

## INTERVIEWS

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) describe two different theoretical approaches to interviewing: interviews as a process of knowledge collection or as a site of knowledge construction through the interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer, who enter a collaborative process (Fontana and Frey, 2000; Gubrium and Holstein, 1997; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). In the latter approach, they describe the qualitative interviewer as

a “traveller” (p.48), acknowledging that knowledge is not simply collected but constructed and influenced by the researcher’s interpretations. This approach to interviewing is reminiscent of a constructivist and interpretivist methodology that was discussed earlier in this Chapter.

Through interviews, the researcher can collect empirical data in the participants’ own words, obtain insights and access to their interpretations, perceptions, and constructions of their reality (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Punch, 2009). Interviews are described as purposeful conversations (Morgan, 1997), where discourse and negotiation about meaning take place (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). To facilitate meaning-making, the interviewer should provide a space where interviewees can articulate their views freely and democratically, without a superimposed, manipulative and rigid structure dominated by the interviewer (see Fontana and Frey, 2000). Defining the interviewee as an active meaning-maker, engaged in processes of interpretation, differs from traditional approaches in interviewing, which rely on the experiential truths held by the passive interviewee (Gubrium and Holstein, 1997). According to Gubrium and Holstein, the interviewer should encourage the production of narratives from the interviewee and as DeVault (1990) maintained, to address topics that are relevant to the interviewees’ lives. Yet, at the same time having a broad agenda of topics that are discussed in the interview can help researchers to focus on the research questions and to collect comparable data (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). To compromise between the need to let the interviewees raise issues that are important to them on the one hand and the need to collect comparable data on the other, I decided to use the format of semi-structured, topical or guided interviews. This allowed uncovering participants’ views on a few general topics, while it also respected how participants structure and frame their responses (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). The use of semi-structured interviews led some participants to deviate from the topic, which was also valuable as they provided new insights into matters that are important to them. Yet, I was able to direct the focus back to the topic of citizenship education with the help of the guiding questions.

## INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS WITH ADULTS

Individual interviews are well suited to focus in-depth on the participant's perspective about complex systems, processes or phenomena (Ritchie et al., 2003). In this study, the purpose of individual interviews with principals, teachers and policymakers was to uncover their perspective on underlying meanings of citizenship education in each context through their knowledge about the practice and ideology that underpin it. One reason why I have chosen individual interviews was to provide a confidential and safe environment for the interviewees, where they could voice their opinions freely. Confidentiality and anonymity have proven to be of importance and were ensured throughout the research (see the section 'Ethical considerations' for further details); since participants partly shared information that they did not want their superiors to know about and that could have professional or personal consequences if their views were public.

All interviews were guided by some general questions about the participants' background, understandings of identity, citizenship education and the conflict in Northern Ireland and Israel. Then, the interview usually went in a direction that the interviewee decided to focus on. The individual interviews varied in their length but usually lasted between 40 and 90 minutes. They took place either in their office in the school or in their organisation, in coffee places or at university.

## FOCUS GROUPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Traditional approaches to research of children and young people treat them as objects of study, which is shaped by adult definitions and adult interests (Grover, 2004). These approaches have been challenged by children's rights movements and the new social studies of childhood (Barker and Weller, 2003; Marshall and Rossman, 2011). These perspectives reject perceptions of young people as passive citizens-in-waiting and instead treat young people as competent social actors and citizens (Kurth-Schai, 1988). Since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) maintains that

children have a right to their voices being heard and considered in decisions that affect their lives, increasingly methodologies are developed and conducted that are sensitive to the rights, demands, and needs of young people. These methodologies seek to enable them to express their perspective, to preserve the authenticity of their voices, and to facilitate collaboration throughout the research process (Grover, 2004).

This study sought to include the views of young people on citizenship education and the conflict, to provide them with an opportunity to raise their concerns, and to consult their opinion on the subject. Yet, I explained earlier that the participatory approach I sought to implement was constrained by time and access. Therefore, I have included participatory elements in the focus group interviews, which are described below.

Krueger and Casey (2009) suggested that the purpose of group interviews or focus groups is to gain a better understanding of how people feel or think about a topic through listening and collecting information from them. Group interviews can provide a space for young people to discuss and articulate their educational experience and the relevance of citizenship for their everyday life in general. One major rationale for using group interviews with young people was to address the power inequalities that exist between the adult researcher and the students (Eder and Fingerson, 1997).

In a research project about citizenship, there should be also an emphasis on participation and agency, a "collaborative form of inquiry" (p.8), relying on democratic dialogue and involving participation in directing the research (Heron and Reason, 1997). Participatory methods facilitate the process of knowledge production as opposed to knowledge gathering, with the aim to encourage debate through the articulation of multiple voices as a ground for empowerment (Veale, 2005). The research process should be based on non-hierarchical relationships, reciprocal learning and principles of social justice (Fals-Borda, 2001). Due to the power imbalance between adults and children, there is a need to promote reciprocity through methods, where children and young people are given the opportunity to articulate their views (Barker and Weller, 2003). Eder and Fingerson (1997) argued that the power imbalance is minimised in-group interviews when young people outnumber the

researcher, creating a more natural setting, where young people are usually more relaxed and comfortable in groups with their peers.

Another rationale for using group interviews is that they allow space for interaction among the participants, to probe and comment on each other's views, which can increase the diversity of perspectives (Morgan, 1998). The focus groups allowed me to observe how participants interpret and negotiate complex concepts (Powell and Single, 1996) such as citizenship and identity.

Eder and Fingerson (1997) suggested that combining the interview with an activity that young people are familiar with could reduce the artificiality of the group interview and create a more natural environment. By integrating activities into focus group discussions, the group is confronted with a greater variety of interactions, which stimulates interest and further discussion (Darbyshire et al., 2005). Given the cross-cultural context of the study, activities also helped to reduce the language barrier as participants relied not exclusively on oral language (Colucci, 2008).

I facilitated two activities in the focus group interviews: the first activity was brainstorming about citizenship, where students were asked to design a citizen followed by a discussion about their understandings of citizenship, whether citizenship is important for young people, and about problems associated with citizenship. In the second activity, students were asked to brainstorm on identities of young people in Northern Ireland/Israel and what or who influences these identities. This provided the basis for a discussion about which identities are important to young people and whether these are addressed in the citizenship lesson. Afterwards, the interviews moved towards a discussion about students' experiences with citizenship education and their understanding of the conflict, racism, and sectarianism in Northern Ireland/Israel.

Morgan (1998) suggested that focus groups should generally include between six and ten participants, but he recommended smaller groups when it is likely that individuals have a lot to say about the topic at hand. The focus groups in this study varied from two to five participants and one additional single interview was conducted with a student who was

free while his classmates had to do a test. Although this interview was planned as a focus group, it was also quite refreshing and informative to conduct an individual interview with a young person because it provided a deeper insight into individual attitudes, backgrounds and opinions (Eder and Fingerson, 1997). Moreover, focus groups also allow observing how the individuals interact with each other and how they co-construct meaning through these interactions (Morgan, 2002; 2012). While I requested to keep groups small to three or four participants so the influence of other peers could be minimised (Eder and Fingerson, 1997), in some cases more students wished to participate. Consequently, the conduct of focus groups was more flexible and pragmatic in practice as I prioritised inclusivity so all young people who wished to participate were able to do so.

The focus group interviews usually lasted for one lesson (45-50 minutes) and in some cases the students decided to continue with the interview during their break. I asked the teachers to recruit students from different gender and mixed abilities backgrounds. In most focus groups there was an even ratio of different genders, yet in Israel slightly more girls than boys volunteered to participate.

### OBSERVATIONS

The main reason for undertaking observations was to gain a deeper understanding of each school's ethos and their approach to citizenship education. These observations were intended to be "naturalistic" (Angrosino and Mays de Perez, 2000; Punch, 2009), to study social interactions in their natural everyday setting with the researcher as a non-participant observer (Angrosino and Mays de Perez, 2000). Such observations can inform researchers about typical language routines, communicative norms and generate a better understanding of the local culture (Eder and Fingerson, 1997). Yet, although observations are intended to be non-interventionist into people's everyday routines, it is also acknowledged that the researcher's presence influences the participants' behaviour during the observation (Cohen et al., 2011).

My intention was to gain a better understanding of how citizenship education is framed and taught in a Catholic, Protestant, Arab-Palestinian or Jewish-Israeli school. I focused

on how citizenship is conceptualised, the teacher's pedagogical approach, the content and the students' participation and contribution in the lesson. The observation was semi-structured; since I prepared an agenda of issues with the intent that the observation will further illuminate these issues. It was assumed that observations allow the researcher to experience first-hand what is taking place and provide a 'reality check' of the setting (Cohen et al., 2013).

A prior meeting between the interviewer and the participants can ease the relationship between them and help to gain rapport (Dockrell et al., 2000; Eder and Fingerson, 1997). Therefore, I conducted an individual interview with the teacher before observing each lesson. This allowed me to consider the teachers' background, their pedagogical approach, and understandings of citizenship and the conflict during the observation. Since the individual interview increased trust and familiarity between the interviewee and me, it is hoped that the interviewees felt more comfortable during the observation. In terms of the students, the observation took place prior to the focus groups. This allowed me to explain my study to them, to let them ask questions about it, and to get to know me a bit before they decided to participate in the focus groups.

The observations were limited to one or two lessons in each school (except for the Catholic school, where citizenship was not on the schedule during the term when the data collection took place, I reflect on this in the limitations section, page 123). In the Jewish-Israeli school, I was also invited to participate in an event and activity to commemorate the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. Similarly, the teacher in the Arab-Palestinian school invited me to come along to a theatre play as part of the citizenship lesson. Certainly, this small number of observations cannot be representative of how citizenship is taught in the schools. Yet, it has complemented and strengthened the other data collected through interviews and documents because it facilitated to gain rapport between the researcher and the participants. Furthermore, it has allowed the researcher to experience at first hand the interactions between the teacher and the students.

## DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS

Since documentary analysis involves illuminating the substantive content and the documents' deeper meanings (Ritchie et al., 2003), documentary data can contribute to triangulation (Denzin, 1989). It can help the researcher to uncover the cultural context and ethos of participants and their institutions (Punch, 2009).

Yet, Atkinson and Coffey (2000) cautioned that documents should be treated as particular accounts of social reality. They explained how texts are constructed based on conventions, creating a documentary reality. To approach this reality, questions about the form, function and the intertextual dimension of documents need to be raised. Documents do not exist in isolation but are related to other documents (Atkinson and Coffey, 2000). For example, the material that a teacher prepared for a lesson reflects partially curricular materials. Consequently, it is important to explore their relationship through an analysis of similarities and differences. Additionally, a critical examination of documents requires considering author- and readership, their purposes, goals and the processes of their production, circulation, and consumption (Atkinson and Coffey, 2000).

As part of this study, I have used documents as supportive data to gain a better understanding of the hegemonic discourse around citizenship education, to get a broader insight into the teacher's practice through their teaching material and the schools' ethos through their websites. I have included in my analysis the current official curricula documents [1], curricula guidance for teachers, legal documents about content and pedagogy, teaching materials shared by the teachers and each school's curriculum and description of their ethos. Since the curriculum of civics in Israel is in Hebrew, I relied on translations of the content page and the help of a Hebrew-speaking academic who has

[1] These documents include the 'Global and Local citizenship' module, which is part of the broader subject of 'Learning for Life and Work' in key stage 4 and key stage 3 as well as the module 'Environment and Society' in key stage 3: in Israel "To be a citizen in Israel: A Jewish democratic state", which is the official textbook for civics and the basis for the curriculum.

studied and analysed the curriculum (I will reflect on this in the limitations section, page 122).

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before and during data collection, researchers should reflect on the impact of their interventions on the participants' lives (Flick, 2014). In the context of research with young people, Punch (2009) suggested consideration of whether the research is also in their interest. During the focus groups, young people were encouraged to reflect on the state of citizenship and social justice in their society. Using qualitative and participatory methods, they were given an opportunity to express their views and reflect on their experience with citizenship education. In general, the young participants were quite interested in these topics and many mentioned that they do not have the opportunity to speak about the controversial aspects of citizenship and identity in the classroom context.

Consent forms were given to participants informing them about the content of the research and their rights, giving them the option to 'opt-in' by signing the consent form and reassuring them that their data will be treated as private and confidential. Forms for young people were written in a more accessible, child-friendly language (Punch, 2009). In addition, consent forms were distributed to their parents and guardians. In Israel, all forms were translated into Hebrew and Arabic. Before presenting the forms to the participants, I introduced myself and the study to the class (except for the Catholic school, where the teacher decided to recruit participants and explain the study herself).

The participants were reminded in the form and again before the interview that they had the right to withdraw at any time, their participation was voluntary, they could refuse to answer questions posed during the interview and that their data would be used as part of the PhD dissertation, presentations at conferences, and publications.

The data were stored securely and all possible identifiers such as names of teachers, students, and schools were removed. During the focus groups, the young people produced drawings and mind-maps, of which they have the right to ownership. Some wanted to keep the material produced during the focus groups, so I took pictures of all their drawings and

mind-maps for my analysis. Some of the drawings contain personal identifiers (for example the name of the area where they live or where the school is located) and thus I have disguised this information and all other identifying data when presenting the drawings in the thesis.

## REFLEXTIVITY

As an interactive process, research is always shaped by the biographies of the participants and the researcher's cultural baggage (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Harding (1987) argued that "the researcher appears to us not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specified desires, and interests" (p.9) so it is important for researchers to reflect on their role and impact on the research. Reflexivity means to reflect critically on oneself, to come to terms with the choice of the research problem and the participants, and to reflect on the researcher's multiple identities that come into play in the research setting (Lincoln and Guba, 2000).

The impact of the researcher's background, as an insider or outsider has been broadly discussed in the literature. Collins (2000) argued that researchers should have lived through similar experiences as their participants for their research to be credible. A shared background can enhance the depth and breadth of the research (Kanuha, 2000), as it can provide a certain level of trust and an openness on the side of the participants, assuming that the researcher will better understand their experiences as 'one of them' (Dwywer and Buckle, 2000). The most important argument for being a 'native', 'indigenous' or 'insider' researcher is probably the issue of power dynamics between researcher and participants. Essed (1991) argued that researchers are better positioned if they investigate members of their own social group, presenting better conditions for non-hierarchical relationships, due to shared experiences.

Cross-cultural research, in particular, demands cultural sensitivity on part of the researcher (Liamputtong, 2008). Ladson-Billings (2000; 2003) explained how European or 'Western' epistemology has traditionally served to justify white supremacy, domination and exploitation of other people through 'objectifying' them. She argued that researchers

must confront the fundamental question of for whom the research is conducted, requiring researchers to question their own privileged position and not to act as colonisers, muting the voices of the marginalised (Ladson-Billings, 2000). The unequal power relationship between the traditionally white and male researcher studying the colonised subject does indeed raise concerns that form part of the agenda of academics of colour who fight for a wider representation of marginalised voices. However, Milner (2007) emphasised that it is more important that researchers, in general, develop "deeper racial and cultural knowledge about themselves and the community or people under study" (p.388) and are "mindful" about their own and others' positionality, than that they themselves are members of the community under study. As a researcher foreign to the settings of Northern Ireland and Israel, I must confront the issue of obtaining 'cultural knowledge' in order to accurately interpret the experiences of the communities under study (Tillman, 2002).

Milner (2007) proposed a framework for researchers guiding them to racial and cultural awareness and positionality in doing their research. His framework consists of four aspects: Researching the self, suggesting that researchers raise "racially and culturally grounded questions about themselves" (p.395); researching the self in relation to others, which he framed as acknowledging the researcher's and participants' different roles and identities that they negotiate throughout the research process; engaged reflection and representation, urging researchers to represent both the researcher's and participants' voices and narratives and finally shifting from self to system, where he argued that researchers should embed issues of race and culture in the wider context moving from the individual towards the structural level. Drawing on this framework, I will discuss my own background in relation to the research participants. The last two aspects, engaged reflection and representation and shifting from self to system, are referred to in the section about the presentation of the data analysis.

## RESEARCHING THE SELF IN RELATION TO OTHERS

Milner (2007) suggested that the different roles assumed by the researcher and participants and what the researcher knows about the communities under study need to be acknowledged. Thus, I will reflect on how my identities and my views have impacted on the research.

First and foremost, I was perceived by my participants as a white, European young woman from a university and thus being privileged in both societies. My German background positions me as a white and Western European immigrant in Northern Ireland and thus as a member of a privileged group that is not affected by racism like other immigrants in Northern Ireland, mainly from Eastern Europe, Asian or African countries. Similarly, in Israel, white (European or North American) Jews represent the dominant population and even though I am not Jewish myself, I could blend into the dominant group. Despite our common working-class background, I would consider myself more privileged than the students in Northern Ireland who live in areas affected by poverty, unemployment, and crime.

In both societies, the participants accepted me as an outsider, as someone from a different place, as a young woman from a university with a European background. Despite the usually warm and welcoming reception by participants, for some there was a sense of ambiguity on whose side I am, leading one boy from the Catholic school to ask me frankly whether I am a Protestant and pointing out that Germany has "invented Protestantism". Similarly, in Israel, I noticed that some people were testing me sometimes to uncover on whose side I am. In these situations, I usually pointed at the complexity of the situation and emphasised that I am trying to understand each side's point of view.

However, I will not deny that my interaction with the participants throughout the research process has been far from neutral and there are a few things that I need to account for. The society I was socialised into is traditionally structured by racism towards people who are not white and Christian. Since 9/11 there is an increasing racist sentiment towards people from an Arab and Muslim background. 'Orientalist' and 'anti-Semitic' stereotypes have

always been prevalent in German culture, literature, and media, which remains an issue even though the German state has officially committed itself towards a policy against "forgetting". Moreover, I grew up in a village where the majority population was Protestant even though in my high-school most students were Catholic. Thus, I carry these views and notions with me and try to challenge myself constantly, through reflection on how my own perceptions are influenced by these views. For example, during the fieldwork, I have kept a reflective journal on my thoughts and experiences during the data collection process and I have discussed some of my impressions with fellow researchers and friends from both contexts. I encourage the reader to take my background into account when reading my analysis and interpretation of the data.

Finally, my political beliefs have shaped considerably the approach I have taken in my research and how the data is interpreted. While I am not active in any political party, I identify as politically-left, Marxist, I am politically active through volunteering in organisations that support refugees, I participated in demonstrations against the denial of rights to refugees, immigrants, LGBTQ people and demonstrations against racism in Israel and Northern Ireland. Regarding my views on the conflict in both societies, I have started my research with preconceived opinions while I have tried to be open to alternative views that challenged my political opinions. It is only fair to say that since I have started learning about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I have sympathised with the situation of Palestinians. However, I developed already in school a particular interest in the crimes committed by the Nazi regime and the history of the Jewish people in Europe. A long and close relationship with a Jewish boyfriend in Germany, his family and community broadened my knowledge about the experience of being a Jewish minority and the meaning Jews attach to Israel. Since I was less familiar with the legacy of the conflict in Northern Ireland and due to its post-conflict status, I think I entered the context more open-minded, even though I do not deny that I am influenced by my political views and this is the lens through which I interpret.

My relationships and friendships with people from both societies under study have also increased my knowledge about their narratives and struggles, while I am consciously not using this as an excuse to define myself as being immune to racist or sectarian ideologies.

Like every other individual and in particular as a 'white' German woman, I am not - though arguably immersion in other people's cultural knowledge together with a willingness to question power and privilege can enhance the understanding of structural racism and sectarianism.

I think that my position as an outsider encouraged participants to be more open to talking about their views. As an example, Colucci (2008) found that her outsider position allowed her participants more freedom to talk about sensitive issues, which they might have been reluctant to discuss if she was a member of their community. According to Liamputtong (2008), there can be a lack of trust if the researcher belongs to a group that historically acted as an oppressor. In Israel, local researchers have reported that for them it can be difficult to conduct research in the context of the other identity group. For example, a Jewish-Israeli researcher told me if he will go into a Palestinian school they might associate him with the intelligence service. While the situation in Northern Ireland might be more relaxed (in military terms at least), the relationship between the researcher and participants from two different communities can be burdened with the legacy of the past and a culture of politeness when it comes to talking about controversial issues. Therefore, I think that in my case it was beneficial that I came from a different context and had no affiliation with either identity group.

## RESEARCHING THE SELF

I grew up in a small village in the centre of Germany, where the majority population can be described as white, Protestant and 'German', while during different times the population also consisted of guest-workers mainly from southern Europe and Turkey, 'resettlers'[48] and refugees. My parents were both born in Germany after the Second World War, from a working-class background whose parents were partly German immigrants from Poland and Ukraine. As most German citizens during the Third Reich my grandparents were

[48] Resettlers are described as 'ethnic Germans' who formed German minorities in other places, particularly Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, who are granted permanent residence and eventually citizenship.

integrated into the machinery of Nazi-Germany through its military and youth organisations – yet to my parents' knowledge they were not supporting its ideology[49]. Nevertheless, the history of the country where I grew up is marked by the promotion of a racist-nationalistic ideology that led to the genocide of the Jewish people, other minorities, and its political opponents and continues to affect the society in Germany where racism remains prevalent.

My family's socio-economic background would be considered working-class with my sister and myself being the only members of our extended family to have graduated from university. Influenced by my father's critical stance towards religion, my sister and I grew up as Atheists. While religion did not play an important role in our home, politics did. My father was politically active in the social democratic party and a former member of a communist youth organisation.

Despite the remoteness of my village, it was characterised by diversity as many refugee and immigrant families lived next-door to our house during my childhood and the students in my primary school were from diverse backgrounds. However, my secondary school, a *gymnasium*[2] was mostly attended by white, middle-class, 'German' students. This has shaped considerably my privileged position as being able to attend university. Most of my adult life, I have spent studying and working in other countries like France, Canada, the United States, Israel and the UK. During my PhD, I moved between Northern Ireland and Israel, making both places my centre of living for quite some time. Thus, although I am an outsider to both societies, I have spent considerable time in both places and developed relationships with people from the communities under study.

[49] My grandparents did not support the national-socialist ideology due to their religious beliefs or support for the communist party. My grandfather's resistance led to his imprisonment.
[2] Most advanced school type in the German three-tier system with an emphasis on academic learning.

## CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS DURING DATA COLLECTION

The previous section established that the data collection and analysis is influenced by my own background, views, and experiences. This section will discuss challenges I encountered during the data collection and how this influenced the analysis of the data. The major challenges stemmed from the use of language and access to participants, which also limited the use of a participatory approach.

### LANGUAGE

My background as an outsider comes with its challenges, as I was researching different cultures than my own in a different language than my own. Cross-cultural research requires that the researcher is familiar with the cultural context of the research setting and has spent some time there (Irvine et al., 2008). Having lived in English-speaking countries for more than three years prior to the fieldwork has enabled me not only to conduct my research in English but also to access the different cultures in Northern Ireland through this language. However, I had difficulties with parts of the specific language that young people use in Northern Ireland and I had to ask them to explain to me terms such as "hoods"[50] and "kneecapping[51]," which also carry a cultural meaning.

Similarly, having lived in Israel before for four months and with a basic knowledge of Hebrew and Arabic (even though I have conducted the interviews in English) allowed me to become familiar with the cultures in this context as well. Yet, as the research in Israel was not conducted in the participants' or my own native language, this is an issue that requires further discussion.

Language is a fundamental tool for researchers to understand human behaviour, social processes, and cultural meanings (Hennink, 2008). I decided to conduct the research in English, based on the premise that all participants have a sufficient proficiency in this

[50] The term 'hoods' is used in Northern Ireland to describe young people who are involved in minor criminal activities such as car theft, shop-lifting, vandalising etc.
[51] 'Kneecapping' in Northern Ireland refers to a form of criminal punishment or torture employed by paramilitary groups to punish petty criminals or 'hoods'.

language and to facilitate comparison. However, English is neither my first language nor the native language of Arab-Palestinian and Jewish-Israeli participants. While it was possible to conduct all my interviews in Israel in English, this might have limited the participants' capacity to express themselves as they would have in their native language. Furthermore, the knowledge of English became involuntarily a selection criterion for participants. Depending on their fluency in English, the participants would be more or less engaged in the interviews and discussions. While this was more of a challenge in individual interviews, where we had to use a dictionary during some occasions, this was less an issue in the focus groups with young people as they helped each other with their vocabulary. Despite these challenges, I have preferred to speak to the participants directly rather than through a translator, as it has been argued that translators are not "neutral" as interpreters, but bring with them a cultural baggage (Temple and Edwards, 2002).

Additionally, since the policy documents and the textbook in Israel are in Hebrew, I relied on the help of native speakers and dictionaries for translation. According to Temple and Edwards (2002), this is a limitation since translation is not merely "technical" but involves constant decision-making about the cultural meanings that language carries, which "is not a neutral medium" (p.3). I have sought to address this limitation partly by asking different native-speakers (fellow researchers and friends) for help so I could take into account their different approaches to translation.

### ACCESS AND TIME

I mentioned earlier that I intended to recruit a group of young people as research advisors. Grover (2004) argued that children and young people are rarely consulted on research problems and research design. Researchers advocating children's rights-based participation have worked with peer advisory groups (PAG) and children as co-researchers (Kellet, 2011; Lundy and McEvoy, 2012). Yet, to live up to the importance of context, I would have needed to recruit two mixed groups in both Northern Ireland (Catholic-Protestant) and in Israel (Arab-Palestinian-Jewish-Israeli) and arrange at least three sessions with each of them in addition to the fieldwork I have conducted (40 interviews, 5 observations), which would have gone beyond the scope of what is doable

in a PhD project. Therefore, I decided to refrain from working with PAGS and children as co-researchers since I preferred to attend to the depth that is advised in qualitative instead of the breath of different methods.

Access to schools and participants has also proven to be a serious challenge, in particular in Northern Ireland. It quickly became clear that in order to gain access to schools, one must rely on contacts such as fellow researchers and friends, who have facilitated the contact with principals and citizenship teachers. This is also the reason why I had to compromise regarding the type of schools, which vary in their location (the Arab-Palestinian and Protestant school are considered urbaner than the Jewish-Israeli and Catholic school) and in terms of socio-economic background (the populations in the Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Palestinian schools are more affluent). I have included a brief sketch of the schools at the beginning of the findings section so the readers can familiarise themselves with each school's particular context.

In the Catholic school, I was not able to interview the principal due to her busy schedule and I could not observe a citizenship lesson since the subject was not taught in the term when I conducted my fieldwork. This has limited the insight into the interactions between students and teachers as well as the conduct of the lesson to the second-hand descriptions that I gained from teachers and students. Consequently, the analysis of the Catholic school's context relies more on the rich descriptions by teachers and students compared to the other schools, where I was able to observe citizenship lessons. In general, the schools in Israel were more accommodating than the schools in Northern Ireland. This influenced the data collection and analysis because it allowed me to get a deeper insight into the schools' environment in Israel than in Northern Ireland.

## ANALYSIS

### THEMATIC ANALYSIS

I analysed the data using thematic analysis, "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data." (Braun and Clarke, 2006:79). This method was

chosen because of its flexibility as a research tool, providing a useful way to organise the rich and complex data gathered across different contexts around the elusive concepts of citizenship and identity. The thematic analysis was guided by a constructivist (Burr, 1995; Lincoln and Guba, 2000) and critical theory approach (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000), which were outlined earlier in the epistemology and ontology section. They emphasise the relationship between identity constructions, power, and constructions of knowledge in a particular politico-historical context. Following a theory-driven as opposed to a data-driven approach, influenced the decision to foreground certain themes in the presentation of the data in the remaining chapters (see Braun and Clarke, 2006).

## TRANSCRIPTION

The data include notes from observations, photographs from the drawings in the focus groups, policy documents, curricula, teaching material, and verbal data from interviews and focus groups. I transcribed all interviews, using the process of transcription to familiarise myself with the data and to note down initial codes and themes. Transcribing most interviews immediately after they were conducted allowed me to pick up on potential themes in the next interviews, while I also tried to maintain a certain consistency between the interviews by asking similar questions. Thus, while I focused on 'latent' themes, as will be explained in the next section, I also familiarised myself with the whole data set.

In the process of transcription, I produced verbatim transcripts in the first instance and only when I had written up the analysis I edited some of the quotes (the changes are indicated throughout the text) in order to make the text clearer to the reader but without altering its meaning. However, I did not always transcribe the whole focus group interviews, but only when the students were focused on the task or having conversations that were related to the topic. In Israel, when participants struggled to express themselves in English, a dictionary was used during the interview or I translated the terms later and encouraged them to express their ideas through alternative words. Partly, I have added translations in addition to the original words in the presentation of the data.

## CODING, THE CREATION OF THEMES AND THE USE OF SOFTWARE

During the process of transcription, I coded the transcripts and the documents such as the teaching materials, curricula, and materials from each school's website. After this initial "open-coding" (Burnard, 1991), I summarised them into broader themes, which capture "something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represent[…] some level of *patterned* response or meaning within the data set." (Braun and Clarke, 2006:82). Put another way, a theme is an idea that traverses the data collected, attracting the attention of the researcher (Braun and Clarke, 2006). I decided to focus on themes that are relevant to the research questions and those that reoccurred among different participants, during observations, and in the collected documents. Resulting from the exploration of the quite elusive concepts of identity and citizenship, I focused on the analysis on the latent level, which Braun and Clarke (2006) defined as going "beyond the semantic content" in order to "examine the underlying ideas, assumptions and conceptualizations - and ideologies - that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data." (p.84).

To identify themes as repeated "patterns of meaning" (Braun and Clarke, 2006:86), I searched for themes throughout the data collection process, trying to clarify emerging ideas, since "data collection and analysis typically go hand in hand to build a coherent interpretation." (Marshall and Rossmann, 2011:208). Examples of themes that were very dominant across the data are avoidance and censoring. I have identified them as patterns in the interviews with policymakers, principals, teachers and students and then analysed them further against the background of the literature. After the transcription, I coded the entire dataset with the help of a qualitative analysis software (Atlas.ti). During this process, I familiarised myself with the data and noted down ideas for headings, categories and codes. These were checked again in reference to the transcripts and also during the writing up stage. I compared the themes that I had narrowed down to 'avoidance' and 'censoring' with the complete transcripts and recordings. This facilitated to keep the

analysis and interpretation of the data closer to their original meanings and context (Burnard, 1991).

The benefits and limitations of software in qualitative research have been discussed in the literature. Authors raised concerns that the use of software for qualitative analysis distances the researcher from the data (Fielding and Lee, 1998), leads researchers to rush through the analysis (Weitzman, 2000), or decontextualizes the data (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). However, the benefits of using a software like Atlas.ti are that it helps to manage large amounts of data, by providing tools for organising, storing, and searching through the data (Gibbs, 2008; Ritchie et al., 2003). I used the software only as a tool for 'analytic support' (Atkinson and Coffey, 1996), as a database that helped me to organise and structure the large amounts of data that I collected. While it assisted in organising themes, drawing comparisons and identifying differences, I did not view it as substituting my task in analysing the data. Although Fielding and Lee (1998) raised concerns of detachment between the researcher and the data, from my observation I felt that the software provided me with a better overview of the data, facilitated better comparisons, and allowed quick access to specific parts of the transcripts.

## THE ORGANISATION OF THE DATA: REFLECTIVE REPRESENTATION AND CONTEXTUALISATION

Milner (2007) argued that the white, privileged researcher needs to find ways to represent the voices and narratives of the researched so that they are not muted or overshadowed by the researcher's own (white) interpretation. He called this process 'engaged reflection and representation', as the "researcher's responsibility to listen to the voices and perspectives of those under study […] to provide compelling, fair evidence." (p.396). In the representation of the data, I sought to prioritise the voices of the participants and tried to outline different perspectives and arguments from the literature in the analysis, where I disagree with the participants' interpretations (see for example interpretation of teachers' statements pages 172-74; 177-79). However, in all research, the interpretation is considerably shaped by the researcher's theoretical lens, background, and views. Thus, I

hope that by providing the reader with detailed accounts, they can assess the analysis and interpretations in the light of these influences.

Finally, Milner (2007) also suggested that embedding concepts of race and culture that arise during the research in the wider socio-historical and political context allows moving from an individual to a structural level. Illuminating the connections between the structural, institutional, and individual level represents a central concern of this thesis and traverses the literature review, the methodology, and the data analysis. I have sought to embed expressions of identity, culture, and citizenship in the context of each school, the respective community, and finally in the society as a whole in the representation of the data.

## CONCLUSION

This Chapter introduced the reader to the qualitative approach, the methods, ethical considerations, a reflection on the researcher's background, and the process of the data analysis. I discussed how the topic of citizenship education and identity in the context of two societies, where the researcher is an outsider, benefits from a qualitative approach that employs individual and group interviews, observations, and the analysis of documents. At the same time, I reflected also on the limitations and challenges that come with this approach. The researcher's background and relationships with the participants also influenced how the data has been analysed and how it is presented in the remaining chapters. The following data analysis starts with a brief description of each school context, which consists mainly of field notes that I collected in my reflective journal during the school visits. The main part of the analysis is structured into two chapters: Chapter four discusses the theme of avoidance and how it emerged on the policy level and in the context of each school across Northern Ireland and Israel. Chapter five introduces how sidestepping is a result of the processes of censoring by a managerialist culture and identity politics, which are reproduced to some extent by the schools and inside the classrooms.

# FINDINGS

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS

This section introduces the reader briefly to each school context, providing background information about the environment in which the school is situated, the school population, the school ethos and the role citizenship education plays in the school in terms of the hours allocated to teaching and the importance attached to it by the school leadership. As noted earlier, beside statistics and interview excerpts, these descriptions rely mainly on my fieldnotes that I collected in a reflective journal during my school visits. In this journal I noted down my impression of the school environment and how I was welcomed in each school. The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with a more detailed description of each school context, so the data can be situated against this background.

### PROTESTANT SCHOOL

The Protestant school is located in the outskirts of a major city in Northern Ireland, in an area that is predominantly Protestant, where crime is still a prevalent feature of the area and which ranks quite low in the social deprivation index of Northern Ireland (NISRA, 2010). The school was merged with another predominantly Protestant school, which increased its enrolment.

While most students are from a Protestant background, since the merger the pupil population has become increasingly diverse including pupils from other cultural, religious, and national backgrounds. Yet, more than half of the student population is Protestant, 3.3 percent is Catholic and about 22 percent have another religion or have not indicated their religious background (DE, 2017b). During the time of the data collection decorations featuring the Union Jack were put up to commemorate the 12th of July so it was quite visible that the area in which the school is located sought to promote a Protestant identity and culture.

Decorations and signs in the schools seek to transmit a positive message of encouraging achievement and leadership. The value of courtesy is emphasised on the school's website and links to the school's strict policy on uniforms and appearance, which has been resented by some parents. In a newspaper article, the principal has defended this policy by linking it to the promotion of a positive image of the school and as a visualisation of the school's overall "readiness for work".

During my visits to the school, I could not identify any display of the school's cultural, national or religious identity, suggesting certain 'neutrality'. Related to this, in the interviews, students have told me that due to the diversity of students' backgrounds, no cultural or religious events are celebrated in the school to not to offend anyone. Even though I could not identify any symbols that refer to a particular culture, religion or nation, the environment of the school and the areas where the students are from are dominated by a Protestant (and loyalist) ethos.

I gained access to the school through the vice-principal, who was very supportive of my research, perhaps because he was also pursuing a degree at the university at the time of the fieldwork and regarded it as an important project. While he himself was very enthusiastic about citizenship education and viewed it as an important subject, another teacher suggests that the school does not attach enough importance to the subject stating that not much time is allocated to it on the timetable (1 period per week, 10 lessons per term and year since citizenship is only one unit of Learning for Life and Work (LLW)). The fact that significance is attached to LLW as a GCSE subject is reflected in the school's strong performance, according to the vice-principal. However, policymakers and other teachers have argued that in general, the subject's strength fades at key stage four, as it is taught as quite an academic subject based mainly on memorisation of ideas and concepts while building less on methods of active learning.

### CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Like the Protestant school, the Catholic school is located in the outskirts of a major city in Northern Ireland. Despite being located in a socially-deprived area, the school performs

above national average, which as one teacher claimed can be traced back to its efforts to develop good relationships with the students and parents as well as a good pastoral system. The background of the students is exclusively Catholic with some students coming from the Irish-traveller community. In this sense, this school is less diverse than the Protestant school. The area around the school has a strong Irish-Republican identity, expressed through murals that commemorate the Hunger Strikes, paramilitaries, Irish culture, and nationalism. In the interviews, the young people from this school reported about various crimes that were happening in this area including murder and drug abuse.
One teacher explained that the area is marked by a lack of investment, high unemployment and high rates of suicide among young people of whom many come from a background of poverty and have been looked after by social services. This also came up during the activities with the students, who described the social reality of young people through drug and alcohol abuse, suicide, crime and social services.

In contrast to the Protestant school, this school was more open in displaying its identity; when entering the school, one would encounter a poster with the picture of the Pope; every classroom was furnished with a cross on the wall and pictures of Jesus and Mary.

One teacher described the ethos as positive, as encouraging young people "to outperform what's expected of them" (Teacher 2, Catholic school). There also seemed to be an emphasis on creating informal relationships between students and teachers that were not apparent in the Protestant school. For example, one of the teachers greeted every student before class and often involved them in a chat, creating a more informal relationship between teachers and students.

There seemed to be divergent perceptions about the importance of citizenship education on part of the school management and the citizenship teachers on the other side. I gained access to this school through one citizenship teacher who was very enthusiastic and supportive of the subject itself and my research. Yet, as noted in the Methodology Chapter, despite attempts to interview the principal this was not possible. One of the citizenship teachers stated that from her point of view the principal does not regard citizenship as an important subject and would mock it occasionally. Both teachers further described that

teachers from other subject areas who were invited to teach the subject were not very enthusiastic about it and did not see it as important. In contrast, the two teachers who I interviewed participated in the initial teacher training for the subject. They emphasised the importance of citizenship to prepare young people for their future in terms of personal development and for life in a conflict-affected society.

### JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL

The Jewish-Israeli school is located in a suburban area in Israel, inside of a Kibbutz[52]. It was formed as part of the kibbutz movement and the Kibbutz itself has been growing in terms of its population and economy. It has eventually become privatised as many other of its type. In terms of its size, the school is comparable to the Protestant school in Northern Ireland. I became acquainted to this school through an Israeli colleague who was a student there himself in the past and he introduced me to the teachers and the principal.

While in the past most students would come from the Kibbutz, the schools' catchment area has expanded and now includes adjacent villages and cities. In terms of the socio-economic background, one teacher explained that the number of students from higher-income families has increased since more students come from outside of the Kibbutz. Regarding the socio-cultural background of the school population, the school would be almost exclusively Jewish, apart from one Arab-Palestinian teacher and possibly some of the staff like cleaners or caretakers. The students were described during the interviews as mostly secular and this is one reason why the school started a contact programme with a religious Jewish school. When asked about the cultural background of the Jewish students, one teacher responded that it is mixed, but the majority of students are from an Ashkenazi background.

The ideology of the school mirrors in many ways the ideology of the Kibbutz, which was established by Ashkenazi Jews and thus influenced by their culture and history, suggesting that it does not reflect the narrative and identity of Mizrachi students. One teacher

[52] Kibbutz is the term for collective communities in Israel that are/were based on agriculture.

explained that the ethos of the school is about the Holocaust (reflecting the history of the Ashkenazi Jews). Similarly, during the time of data collection, there was an event held in memory of former Prime Minister and Labour party member Yitzhak Rabin, which further reflects the school's association with the political (Ashkenazi) left. Moreover, there is a picture of Rabin in the entrance of the main school building.

It was explained that the teachers and students who are from the Kibbutz would grow up in an environment that is politically left-wing and Zionist, as most people would vote for rather "left" parties such as the labour party (Avoda). The history and ideology of the Kibbutz are described as having contributed to the Zionist cause, which is embodied through Israeli flags, displayed all around the school property.

The school management and the teachers stressed the importance of citizenship education. In addition to the compulsory teaching of civics from year 10 to 12, school managers introduced another subject entitled 'Humanities' that is taught alongside other subjects from year 7 to 9. According to the school's website, 'Humanities' covers a mix of topics such as literature, history, and culture in Israel.

During the interviews, it became clear that citizenship education extends beyond what is officially prescribed. For example, from Year 10 all students in the school must participate in a project called "social culture[53]" usually for one year and to pass the matriculation examination they need to participate for three years. This project involves volunteering in social schemes that support young people, the elderly or refugees among others.

Moreover, as with other Jewish students in Israel, the students from this school have to take part in the mandatory trip to Poland during year 10 or 11. Throughout this trip, students visit historical sites of the Holocaust such as the former concentration camp Auschwitz.

[53] Translated from Hebrew: (הרבות חברתית)

## ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL

The Arab-Palestinian school is located in the centre of a mixed-city, inhabited by both Arab-Palestinians and Jewish-Israelis. Yet, as some students pointed out to me when we went on a trip through the city, most inhabitants would live in separate neighbourhoods stating: “This is where the Arabs live - this is where the Jews live.” In terms of its size, this school is the smallest of all four, but comparable to the size of the Catholic school. In contrast to the other schools, which are all public high schools, this school was a private high school. All students are from an Arab-Palestinian background, mostly Christian with a minority of Muslim students. According to the principal, the students are mainly from a middle-class background.

Again, I gained access to the school through the citizenship teacher who was interested in and supportive of my research project. He explained to me that this school was at first only open for the Christian community but was eventually opened for students from all backgrounds. Yet, in many ways, the Christian ethos of the school remains dominant. For example, the citizenship teacher explained to me that the school preferred to hire him because of his Christian background. Moreover, the Christian ethos is also visible through the display of religious symbols throughout the school such as crosses and sculptures of Virgin Mary. On its website, the school states to promote values of Arab culture, which they relate to brotherhood, love, support, and attention to the other. It further states to aim to develop students’ independent and self-directed learning in an atmosphere that takes into account the differences between the students. When I asked the teacher about the values that the school seeks to promote, he named educational success and good grades.

As a private Christian school, which is generally considered ‘better’ in terms of the teachers and overall conditions than state-run Arab schools, this school is preferred by Arab-Palestinians who can afford the tuition (Al-Haj, 1995). Similar to other private Christian schools (see Okun and Friedlander, 2005), this school has a selective admission policy favouring Christian over Muslim applicants (at least for teachers, as the interviewed teacher reported) reflecting the Christian ethos of the school as of being “a minority in a

minority" (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school) that needs to serve and protect this minority[54].

The school puts a strong emphasis on educational achievement as a way of self-empowerment for Arab-Palestinian citizens and therefore success in the matriculation examination in subjects like citizenship is considered important. The teacher described it as an important subject because it teaches students about their rights as citizens and knowledge about democracy in Israel. It was to be expected that the role of citizenship education as preparation for the military is contentious among Arab-Palestinian schools. Yet, the principal framed it as "the problem" of Arab-Palestinian citizens in Israel that they do not serve in the army and thus they do not receive their full rights as citizens. This statement suggests that she supports the idea of the military as a force of assimilation, which will be described in Chapter four.

# CHAPTER 4: AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES IN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

## INTRODUCTION

This Chapter is chiefly informed by the theoretical framework on cultural hegemony presented in Chapter two. Cultural hegemony was described as a system of values, attitudes, beliefs, and moralities (Gramsci, 1971/1929), which are mediated through processes of socialisation such as educational policies and the overt and covert curriculum (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1984). These processes follow the goal of cultural reproduction of the ruling classes who seek to manifest their dominance as the 'common-sense' (Althusser, 1971; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990).

Through interviews, observations, and documentary analysis I sought to explore the hegemonic discourse, to answer the research question of how cultural hegemony is expressed through the overt and covert citizenship curricula. The central argument that

[54] There are no Muslim private schools, since the Muslim population is not allowed to keep autonomous religious institutions (Al-Haj, 1995).

emerges from the data is that educational policies are permeated by avoidance as an expression of cultural hegemony.

It was argued earlier in Chapter two that avoidance is a powerful hegemonic strategy that sustains the status quo in each society. By eluding the critical and potentially transformative aspects of citizenship education (such as critical pedagogy, critical multiculturalism, conflict transformation), avoidance trickles down from the policy level to schools and finally to classrooms. Avoidance is not simply a form of domination, but schools, teachers, and students subtly reproduce it. Therefore, this Chapter addresses also the second research question of how different schools respond to the citizenship education policies. While this Chapter will focus on avoidance strategies, the next Chapter introduces the reader to the 'censors' that direct and control avoidance.

Citizenship education curricula and educational policies, in general, seek to mediate a 'common sense' that is presented as 'apolitical' and legitimate (Apple, 2004). Drawing on the collected data, the 'common sense' is shaped by the interest that seeks to depoliticise the content of citizenship education in Northern Ireland and Israel. In both societies, dealing with the political dimensions of the conflict might not be necessarily in the interest of political and economic elites, because this would raise questions about victimhood, accountability, and allotting responsibility for the violence exerted during the conflict. However, curricula in citizenship education and other related subjects like history touch inevitably on aspects of the respective conflicts and their legacies as they have shaped the political systems, political institutions, legal systems, values and beliefs in these societies. Similarly, critical political thinking, following Freire's critical pedagogy can provide means to dismantle dominant knowledge and ideologies such as racism (Banks, 2008).

Indeed, in Northern Ireland and Israel curricula specify aspects of the conflict as part of the content in citizenship education. Yet, by looking closer at how 'conflict' and 'critical thinking' are framed and approached, it becomes evident that the curricula do not promote conflict transformation or critical pedagogy. In contrast, they even enable schools and teachers to be at liberty to avoid addressing controversial and critical aspects of the

conflict and the structural dimensions of racism and sectarianism through a 'flexible' curriculum. Therefore, in the following section, I will outline the impact of this 'flexible' approach, this will be followed by a discussion of how critical thinking, conflict, and racism/sectarianism are depoliticised in the respective curricula.

## POLICY: FLEXIBILITY AS AN AVOIDANCE STRATEGY

The curriculum in Northern Ireland is characterised by its inquiry approach towards history (Barton and McCully, 2005) and its emphasis on the development of skills through an interactive pedagogy (CCEA, 2007). Instead of prescribing a specific content, it allows schools and teachers to be flexible regarding the content that is addressed in the classroom. They are encouraged to focus on 'active learning' in the curriculum, referring to the facilitation of discussions and mind mapping as opposed to traditional pedagogy like textbook study (CCEA, 2015c).

This appears at first glance as an expression of a progressive pedagogy, shifting away from its predecessor, which had a very prescriptive "heavy" content as one policymaker remarked. He explained that the rationale, which underpins increased flexibility in the curriculum, is there to make the experience of learning more relevant for young people, growing up in a divided post-conflict society. Yet, the focus on inquiry, flexibility, and skills-development also comes with its issues, since it allows schools to set their own focus and interpret the concepts according to their own ethos. Similarly, the active learning approach is somewhat vague, as the curriculum guidance only defines it as a pedagogy "to facilitate different learning styles" (CCEA, 2000a:21)[55]. One policymaker explicitly referred to this and highlighted the limits of such an approach:

> *[S]chools can approach these [concepts in citizenship] in so many different ways, so you may not have a consistent approach to it, that's the other side of it. (…) Now at key stage four, you can see they [the key concepts] are very loose (…) what*

[55] There is another guidance handbook on active learning strategies that is analysed in the section about neoliberalism, which provides more examples about active learning. Yet it will be argued that this guidance also fails to provide a clearer definition.

*you have for Local and Global Citizenship in these bullet points, that's all teachers have, that's all you get. (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland*)

Chapter one and two discussed how the concepts of diversity and inclusion, equality and justice, human rights and social responsibility theoretically allow an exploration of issues related to the conflict (CCEA, 2007). There is a rationale for keeping the content flexible for a political subject in a society where narratives and perspectives on the conflict are contested and where teachers in different school contexts might potentially interpret these concepts differently according to their ethos. However, this shifts the burden of finding a way to teach these complex political concepts to the schools and teachers.

In Israel, the citizenship curriculum [56] also retains a certain flexibility, which one policymaker described as 'vagueness' since different groups in society can interpret it in a way that suits their ideology. As an example, she referred to the concept of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state:

*In Israel, the solution is to put everything [referring to all demands by different groups in society] inside and not to decide and then everyone is happy. And it's very vague, everyone can find what they want and read it the way they want. Even if you talk about Israel as a Jewish democratic state, its citizens can read the democratic in his way and the Jewish in his way. So, it's very vague as you have there everything, you have the Zionists, you have the values of the patriots, to love your country and to learn about it and to learn about your culture, and to be a pluralist person and to know the way democracy is working. You have everything, really! (…) It's awful! In this way, it's like you are doing nothing because everyone takes it to his place. (Policymaker 6, Israel)*

According to this policymaker, there is an ambiguity regarding the understanding of a Jewish democratic state. She explained that this approach seeks to combine democratic

[56] At the time of the data collection the curriculum was in the process of being revised and remains subject to further change. Consequently, some of the discussions refer to the old curriculum and some to the new textbook and civics material, which is becoming increasingly shaped by the nationalist-religious agenda of the current government.

values of pluralism and nationalistic values of patriotism. The impact of this ambiguity is that schools approach the concept of the Jewish democratic state in a way that reproduces the school's and community's ethos. She criticised that schools are left at liberty to emphasise patriotism and conservative values over pluralism and democracy. Moreover, she also added that 'peace' or 'conflict transformation' is not the aim of citizenship education in Israel, since this is not part of the political agenda of the current government (Agbaria, 2016a):

> *We have experts in Israel who think [that civic education can contribute to peace or to conflict transformation], but in the situation that we are in right now … it's not the aim. (...) Of course, if the government will make the decision, we can do it, but you can't do it without support from- and I think in Israel it's not even the Ministry of Education, it's bigger than that. (Policymaker 6, Israel)*

Therefore, she concluded that sidestepping of controversies and keeping the subject's role insignificant is in the interest of those who seek to maintain the current political situation:

> *[I]t's very comfortable*[57] *for everyone that [citizenship] is a small subject and everybody fights (…) You're not dealing with it [the controversies]. (Policymaker 6, Israel)*

This statement is an example of how avoidance is not challenged on the policy level. The concomitant lack of political support for citizenship education in Israel, to which the data refers in this Chapter, leaves schools and their teachers at liberty to avoid discussing controversial issues, fostering critical thinking or teaching about racism and sectarianism in a critical manner. Below, I will demonstrate how flexibility facilitates sidestepping, by introducing the reader to three major avoidance strategies: the absence of critical (political) thinking, the decontextualization of the conflict, and finally the avoidance of structural approaches to racism and sectarianism.

[57] Translated from Hebrew [נוח]

## ABSENCE OF CRITICAL (POLITICAL) THINKING AS AN AVOIDANCE STRATEGY

Chapter two discussed different interpretations of critical thinking: the goal of developing 'critical' citizens became increasingly incorporated into citizenship curricula around the world and has been mostly defined as to explore, evaluate, and develop different opinions (Johnson and Morris, 2010). Yet, it is argued that this form of critical thinking differs from critical pedagogy since it does not question mainstream knowledge (Banks, 2008). In contrast, critical pedagogy seeks to empower the oppressed (and also the privileged) to critically reflect on dominant political and economic structures and to challenge the status quo (Freire, 1970). The central argument of this section is that curricula and schools promote benign forms of critical thinking, which are reproduced by teachers and students, and serve as an avoidance strategy.

### POLICY: CRITICAL THINKING AS A SKILL

In the curricula in Northern Ireland and Israel, critical thinking is framed as a skill or a goal. The statutory curriculum for citizenship in Northern Ireland at key stage three specifies critical thinking as one of the central skills (CCEA, 2015a), while the curriculum in Israel states that it is one of the central goals of citizenship education (Bekerman and Cohen, 2017).

In Israel, it is defined as to "reach conclusions based on facts, identify connections between different social phenomena, understand the difference between an opinion and an argument, develop complex opinions and be tolerant toward different opinions" (Cohen, 2016:474). This definition resembles the understanding of it as to explore, evaluate, and develop different opinions that I referred to earlier and it does not contain ideas of critical pedagogy, promoting a shallower form of critical thinking.

Nevertheless, whereas the Israeli curriculum provides a definition, critical thinking is left unspecified in the statutory requirements for citizenship in Northern Ireland (CCEA, 2015a). A more detailed definition is only provided in a guide for teachers on 'Teaching

Controversial Issues', published by the Council for Curriculum, Examination, and Assessment. Interestingly, its definition of critical thinking is similar to definitions of critical pedagogy since it frames its purpose as "[to] identify stereotyping, bias, prejudice and hidden agendas" (2015b:41). By identifying hidden agendas, students are encouraged to expose political interests that shape stereotyping and bias, which might lead them to question the status quo. This is in line with how one of the policymakers defined critical thinking as intended by the curriculum:

> *[Y]ou will be analysing sources, (…) you'll be looking for hidden agendas, so a typical lesson could be around for example around the flag incident, (…) you can be looking at you know how this information is portrayed to different papers, what kind of agenda is here, why are people saying these things, (…) getting them to really thinking about why these questions or why these things are happening. Think beyond what is my experience in my own families and communities. (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland*)

Yet, another guidance document for teachers on active learning strategies describes critical thinking as 'effective thinking' (CCEA, 2000a), framing it as a marketable skill that contributes to students' 'employability'. Such an understanding dilutes the potential of critical thinking as critical political thinking that challenges dominant political and economic structures. Ultimately, these documents only provide guidance for teachers, leaving it up to them to interpret critical thinking. It will become evident later in the discussion of the teachers' interpretation that they are inclined to opt for the 'effective thinking' approach since it less likely to stir controversy.

In Israel, one policymaker claimed that the teaching of skills such as critical thinking is an 'agreeable' aspect of the curriculum among policymakers who represent different interests:

> *[T]hat you have to have an opinion, critical thinking, to know how to have a discussion with others, to know how to write it, to know how to speak [about] it, to know how to analyse what you read, to analyse things in the media and so on. So this is quite agreeable, I don't think that we had a lot of discussions about that.*

> *(…) In the values perspective and the content perspective, there are many doubts about the thing itself. So the main thing I think is seeing Israel as a Jewish democratic state and of course, there are populations that do not agree. But they must teach it because this is our country today. (Policymaker 4, Israel)*

However, the lack of opportunities to critically examine the concept of the Jewish democratic state is criticised by Arab-Palestinian policymakers. Whilst the curriculum promotes the skill of critical thinking, it does not provide the space to criticise the dominant narratives or challenge the status quo, due to the restrictions imposed by other educational policies (see page 51 that refers to the restrictions to teach about the Nakba). Hence, Arab-Palestinian policymakers lamented the fact that critical thinking is absent from the citizenship curriculum. In the excerpt below, the policymaker suggested that even benign forms of it (as described above) are not promoted since the current government has shifted the focus towards "ethnic education":

> *There is no critical thinking in Israel. Maybe in civics before the change of the book, they had a little bit [of critical thinking], because sometimes they have some places for two opinions, but now I think there is no critical thinking. (…) [The] Ministry of Education think[s] [that there] is not enough … ethnic education now. (Policymaker 5, Israel)*

According to this policymaker, the citizenship curriculum in Israel does not encourage the examination of alternative perspectives to the dominant Zionist narrative. The data presented below and in the next Chapter (five) will reinforce this argument by demonstrating how alternative perspectives and criticism are avoided and censored in Israel. While the data suggest that in both jurisdictions the curriculum does not actively encourage critical political thinking, the next section examines if and how schools and teachers practice critical thinking.

### SCHOOLS: DILUTION OF CRITICAL THINKING

The data across schools suggest that citizenship teachers tend to uphold less controversial forms of critical thinking, by approaching critical thinking primarily as a pedagogical

concept that enables teachers and students to explore, evaluate, and develop different opinions but does not critically reflect on mainstream knowledge or political and economic structures. For example, Teacher 1 from the Protestant school understands critical thinking as engaging students with different kind of views, this includes adopting a different stance from her students in order to challenge them:

> *I'm trying to get them to see both sides of the argument and sometimes I play devil's advocate and you know, bring forward the view- but you know I always give around that I may say things, it is not necessarily what I believe- (Teacher 1, Protestant school)*

Similarly, teachers in Israel tend to frame critical thinking as discussing different perspectives, becoming politically active, and thinking independently:

> *(…) you need to show both sides. I don't care if you are left or right wing, I want you to bring the situation as it is, I want you to bring what has been tried before, I want you to bring one side of the conflict and I want you to bring the other side, what do they say. (Teacher 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

> *I told you in every lesson they have to [discuss] – "Ok you [said] told [there is] x,y,z – but there is another way" (Teacher 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

> *I think people need to learn how to criticise, how to be involved in the political situation, they have to read and to communicate, all these things. And we have to give them the [tools] … to decide on which side they want to be. We don't tell them what they have to choose, but they need to have the tools. (Teacher 2, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Whilst this appeared to be the most common definition of critical thinking across all schools, one Catholic and one Jewish-Israeli teacher also described critical thinking additionally as questioning dominant discourses that are portrayed by the media, adults or their peers:

> *Yes, we would do that [teach critical thinking], how does the media portray these things? Is that really the reality or is it somebody's own spin? (…) You know did*

*that create a lot of the problems in Northern Ireland, the way certain things were portrayed? (…) Yeah, we try to teach them, whether they do think critically or not because you know children are very "What you see is what you get!" and "If it's written it has to be true!" (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

*Mainly I think to teach the students how to think and to fight for subjects that are important for them. And to not take everything for granted and what the newspaper says that this is the only truth and things like that. (…) I want them to learn how to ask questions, … to know how be criticised, to criticise the information that they are getting from the parents, the school, from friends, from everyone. (Teacher 3, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Their approach is reminiscent of critical pedagogy and has the potential to develop critical political thinking by questioning dominant ideologies. Yet, they do not specifically refer to power relations, the interests of the political and socio-economic elite or how to challenge the status quo.

Whilst some teachers demonstrated structural understandings of sectarianism, racism (in terms of racism, this was only demonstrated by the Arab-Palestinian teacher) and the conflict, they avoid transmitting these in the classroom. This will be reinforced by the data from the focus groups that will be presented later, which shows that many students tend to draw on one-sided narratives and cultural-psychological explanations of the conflict, racism, and sectarianism.

However, even though critical political thinking is not encouraged or it is diluted and reconfigured into a "skill" that does not develop into critical pedagogy, some students demonstrated a critical awareness that citizenship education does not actually empower them. The following excerpts from Northern Ireland provide an example of a theme that emerged across all schools.

Whilst some students expressed alienation from citizenship and citizenship education, they argued that this is because of how it is delivered to them:

*A[58]: [W]ould you say citizenship is something that really matters to young people?*

*S1: Yes, I would say this.*

*S5: No.*

*S3: It should, but I don't really care about it.*

*S5: It doesn't but it should like it is part of everything. (Focus group 1, Protestant school)*

*A: So, would you say that citizenship is something that really matters to young people?*

*S3: No. Probably like more older people …*

*S2: We don't really get it-*

*S3: Or understand it. (…) But you don't really have a chance to understand it, because no one is like really explaining it to you.*

*S4: There is some [kids] who understand that it is all about politics but there is not that many. (Focus group 2, Protestant school)*

Importantly, one of the students (S4) explained that citizenship is "all about politics", suggesting that teachers depoliticise the subject. Consequently, whilst students partly describe citizenship as an important subject they confirm that it is permeated by avoidance that lessens its importance and depoliticises it.

[58] 'A' in the excerpts from the interviews indicates that the researcher is speaking [Aline].

## DECONEXTUALISATION OF THE CONFLICT AS AN AVOIDANCE STRATEGY

In post-conflict societies like Northern Ireland, education can be framed as part of the reconstruction policy in terms of dealing with the conflict and its legacy (Davies, 2016). Chapter one outlined how the conflict is framed either through a cultural-psychological lens and focuses on the divisions between Catholic and Protestant communities (see Ruane and Todd, 1996; 2005 for critique) or a structural explanation is offered that highlights political and economic inequalities as the root of the conflict. I will argue in this section that a cultural-psychological lens that is devoid of power, which focuses on the ethnic conflict paradigm and individual prejudice, is emphasised over a structural explanation in the curriculum in Northern Ireland.

While the intention of the curriculum for LGC was to provide a structural explanation, it has been diluted by the community relations paradigm and a focus on interpersonal conflict (specified as conflict resolution skills) that allow avoidance of the critical and contentious aspects of the conflict. Addressing the conflict is specified in the statutory requirement of the citizenship curriculum, which states that lessons should "[i]nvestigate how and why conflict, including prejudice, stereotyping, sectarianism and racism may arise in the community" and "[i]nvestigate ways of managing conflict and promoting community relations, [and] reconciliation" (CCEA, 2015a:2). Conflict is approached through a discussion of the different communities, mainly through the promotion of community relations work, in order "to manage interpersonal conflict" (p.5) and to negotiate conflicting values (CCEA, 2007). Some participants stated that they learn about the conflict in related subjects like history and geography. In history, conflict is addressed as to "[I]nvestigate how history has been selectively interpreted to create stereotypical perceptions and justify views" (p.40), mentioning examples such as "the Troubles" or the "Arab-Israeli conflict", while in geography it is framed as addressing conflict through challenging stereotypes (CCEA, 2007). Thus, the curriculum in these subjects grants teachers the option to teach about the recent conflict but teachers are also free to draw on different examples. In LGC, there is a requirement to explore the impact of history on identity constructions but there is no statutory requirement to study the recent conflict

(Emerson, 2012). The interviews with principals and teachers (that will be presented below) suggest that they depoliticise the conflict in citizenship education by focusing on conflict resolution skills, teaching about other conflicts or one-sided historical accounts of the conflict.

In Israel, a review of the textbook for citizenship "To be a citizen in Israel" that I have conducted confirms that it does not mention the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Instead, the textbook refers to 'rifts' in Israeli society, among them the rift between Jews and Arabs, which is only allocated a couple of pages in a book that encompasses about 500 pages (Ministry of Education, 2017a). Framing the current conflict as 'rifts' glosses over its historical, political and structural context. Previous research about textbooks and curricula in Israel stated that narratives about political and historical events are dominated by a Zionist ethos (Pappé, 1997; Podeh, 2000; Shohat, 2003). This is confirmed by the current history curriculum, which foregrounds a Jewish-Zionist narrative and does not address the recent conflict (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Yet, the citizenship curriculum still provides opportunities to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for example by discussing current events (actualia), the concept of equality, human rights education, democratic education or pluralism in Israeli society. The data suggest that teachers partly make use of these channels to address the conflict, but they are restrained by the dominance of one-sided accounts of the conflict which are not challenged by the curriculum (other examples of censors will be introduced in Chapter five).

Both principals in Israel state that the conflict is not addressed through citizenship education in their school. The Arab-Palestinian principal simply indicated that her students "are living it in their daily life", suggesting that this might be enough confrontation with the conflict. Her Jewish-Israeli colleague remarked in the interview that

> *Unfortunately, I think that they absolutely don't speak about it at school, because I don't know if [another policymaker who she knows] told you but most of the people don't know really the facts. I wanted to believe that in civic education we*

*can teach the facts, but the facts are not so like one fact- you know. (Principal, Jewish-Israeli school)*

She referred to the challenges of teaching about the conflict since the 'facts' about it are contested. Her statement suggests that the difficulty of teaching about issues related to the conflict and possibly a lack of knowledge and preparation among teachers lead to an avoidance of the topic altogether.

Compared to all interviewed principals[59], the vice-principal of the Protestant school seemed the most supportive and optimistic that the conflict is addressed in the classroom:

*I think it's the only vessel that we have in education that is now accepted, you know it's now compulsory within the curriculum, so it's the only legitimate vessel that it can be delivered through and the parents can't argue against it- you have to do it. (Vice-Principal, Protestant school)*

However, the curricula do not specify that the recent conflict needs to be addressed: in Israel, they only advise to address the 'rifts' in Israel's society and the school curricula in Northern Ireland refer to the recent conflict only at GCSE level[60]. In the latter case, this mainly stems from the fact that the recent conflict is only an elective module in the history and citizenship curriculum in Northern Ireland (CCEA, 2014; 2015a; 2015c). The lack of clear policy guidance in terms of how to address the conflict in school has an impact on how schools, teachers, and students interpret the conflict in the classroom, which will be discussed in the following section.

[59] I mentioned earlier in the Methodology Chapter that I was not able to arrange an interview with the principal of the Catholic school. Consequently, her perspective is missing here.

[60] The Protestant school presents its curriculum for history on its website, showing that up until the students enter the GCSE stage and decide to take up history as a GCSE subject, they will not learn about the recent conflict in Northern Ireland. In the Catholic school the head of history was asked by the citizenship teacher whether he touches on issues of identity in his subject he denied this.

## BREAKING THE LINK BETWEEN THE CONFLICT'S LEGACY AND CURRENT DIVISIONS

This section presents how teachers tend to refer to the conflict as a residue of the past and this obscures its connection to current political, social, and economic issues in Northern Ireland and Israel. The main argument is that it is more comfortable for teachers to address the conflict through less controversial aspects that are devoid of power and lie in the past than its recent violent outbreaks.

In the excerpts below, teachers and students confirm that the conflict is rarely referred to in the citizenship lesson. Interestingly, students from the Catholic, the Jewish-Israeli and the Arab-Palestinian school suggest that the conflict is even ignored in the classroom. One Catholic teacher explained that the schools' curriculum does not require them to teach about the recent conflict in the citizenship lesson nor in history, which the history teacher later confirmed:

> *That would be history [learning about the conflict]. I'm not even sure if they would learn anything about the conflict in history. (…) But it's definitely not part of our curriculum for citizenship so- we would look at symbols maybe of identity (…) and how that can cause conflict. And we would look at you know how parades can cause conflict and marching causes conflict, you know they don't really- we don't go into what happened during the conflict. (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

Teachers from the Jewish-Israeli school confirm that the curriculum requires them only to talk about the 'rifts' in Israel's society. Yet, they claimed that they seek to rebel against it by making the Israeli-Palestinian conflict part of the lesson by discussing current issues:

> *Not too much [teaching about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict], because the subjects in the bagrut [final examination] are the conflicts between Israelis and Israeli-Arabs, not the Palestinians. But we cannot ignore it, so it's there. I'm usually spending five or ten minutes at the end of the lesson, speaking about what was in the news yesterday, if it's in the bagrut or not in the bagrut. (Teacher 3, Jewish-Israeli school)*

*[I]f there [are] political events, I try to bring it to the school and to connect it to want we learn. The actualia [current issues] is very important, very important. To show them how there is a connection to the reality. It's not history, it's happening now. (Teacher 2, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Despite these efforts by some teachers in both contexts to address the current dimension of the conflict, students are given the impression by the curriculum that the conflict is not relevant anymore. For example, it is depoliticised in Northern Ireland as current events such as marching and parades are treated as separate from events of the past. Importantly, Teacher 2 explained that she allocates five to ten minutes at the end of the lesson to the discussion of the news. This is a very small amount of time, considering the importance of the news (actualia) and the ongoing conflict.

In Israel, the link between the divisions in Israel's society as a result of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not drawn. The excerpts below demonstrate that in the Catholic, Jewish-Israeli, and Arab-Palestinian school students are aware of sidestepping. While some Catholic students believe that the conflict is not happening anymore, another student argued that it is still relevant but partly ignored. She even claimed that they are not allowed to talk about it in class:

*A: And do you also talk about the conflict in Northern Ireland?*

*S4: Little. It's not really happening anymore. (Focus Group 1, Catholic school)*

*A: And do you talk about the conflict in citizenship? (…)*

*S1: No, we are not allowed to talk about it! (…)*

*S5: It's not here!*

*S1: No, it's definitely there but some people end up like just ignore it.*

*A: But you don't talk about it in school? (…)*

*S2: We have it in history. (Focus Group 3, Catholic school)*

Whilst other students and teachers did not state that discussions about the conflict are not allowed, as Students 1 suggests, other students and the teacher also confirmed that there is a lack of opportunity for students to discuss the recent conflict or that they only discuss it in history, as the last excerpt demonstrated.

In the Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Palestinian school, students argued that the conflict is not discussed in the classroom and also suggested that it tends to be ignored:

> *A: Do you also speak about the conflicts in Israel? Like with the Palestinians or conflicts inside society?*
>
> *S1: No. Maybe in 9th grade, we did, but not that much. (Focus Group 1, Jewish-Israeli schools)*
>
> *S5: You know we know what's happening, but we don't talk about it. So, we need more to talk about it. Because any one of us knows that but we don't discuss about it. (Focus group 3, Jewish-Israeli school, Year 9)*
>
> *A: And do you talk about the conflict at all?*
>
> *S1: About the conflict? In the citizenship lesson no. There is a conflict! He [the teacher] told us that there is a conflict but we did not get inside the conflict, we don't (…) discuss it. (Student interview, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Students from the Protestant school stated that they do not learn about the recent conflict, but they learn about different identities and traditions:

> *S4: We learned about all the different flags (…) we didn't learn about "the Troubles". We have done like why they don't like each other.*
>
> *S3: We have just done like where the Protestants and Catholics came from like. Or how the Protestants started out.*
>
> *S4: Yeah and how we don't like each other and why there is so much ignorance there. (Focus Group 4, Protestant school)*

The descriptions in the last excerpt frame the conflict and its legacy as being about 'ignorance' and do not refer to its political and historical dimensions. Therefore, across all schools, the concern emerges that the curricula and citizenship teachers avoid addressing the recent conflict and linking current events to their historical and political context. Whilst some students (S2 from the Catholic school) suggested that they learn about the conflict for example in history, the next section will demonstrate that it is only approached from one-sided and less contentious perspectives that do not broaden the students' knowledge and critical understanding of the conflict.

## PARTIAL ACCOUNTS OF THE CONFLICT AS AVOIDANCE

### NORTHERN IRELAND

Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006) maintained that the choice of narratives about the conflict in conflict-affected societies is biased and driven by certain intentions such as mobilising support for the cause, delegitimising 'the other', depicting oneself as the 'real' victim of the situation and leaving little space for reflecting on one's own 'misdeeds' (see also Bar-Tal and Halperin, 2013). An examination of the narratives of the conflict that are addressed in the citizenship (or history) lesson shows that there is a tendency to focus on events that confirm the dominant narrative of one's own community.

For example, Protestant students referred to these events in the excerpts below, stating that they learn about King William III and orangeism[61]:

> *A: Do you learn about the conflict in citizenship education? Or maybe more in history?*
>
> *S3: No, not really.*

[61] William the III or William of orange or 'King Billy' is remembered and commemorated by Protestants in Northern Ireland for his participation in wars against the Catholic kings Louis XIV of France and James II and VII of England. For an explanation of Orangeism see footnote 3.

*S2: We have learned about King Billy and all. (…) We have learned about the Irish famines.*

*S1: We don't really learn about it. (…)*

*S2: We don't really concentrate on that, we read like one page on it. (Focus group 2, Protestant school)*

*S1: Yeah more in history [learning about the conflict]. (…) We've been going through all of Irish history and how this has led up to everything that happened in Northern Ireland, like home rule.*

*S3: We even did a project on orangeism and stuff.*

*S1: All different things that shaped and caused that Protestants and Catholics here get angry and all fight each other. (Focus group 1, Protestant school)*

In terms of the reasons for the past and on-going violence, some Protestant students blamed democracy as a contributory factor, arguing that it led to the imposition of legal restrictions on their community. They explained that the decisions were imposed after a series of compromises with the Catholic/nationalist community, referring to the example of the decision to take down the Union flag from Belfast City Hall[62]:

*S2: Democracy and politics basically [are causing trouble]. (…) Stormont that like make like all these decisions that- (…) They said take down the Unionist flags and that sparked protests and stuff.*

*S3: But how would that influence?*

*S2: Because that's what starts the actual protests.*

[62] In 2012, the Belfast City Council decided to fly the Union Jack at the Belfast City Hall only on designated holidays instead of throughout the whole year, following a motion introduced by Sinn Fein. This decision sparked protests among loyalist groups, who continue to oppose this decision (Melaugh, 2013).

*S4: Yeah, because like they chose to take down the Union flag. (…) Nobody else had a choice in it. It's [be]cause Catholics didn't want [it] (Focus group 2, Protestant school)*

Therefore, the students identified democracy as a source of conflict because it has pressured the Protestant/loyalist community to compromise with the Catholic/nationalist community. Instead of recognising the city council's democratic decision, one of the students claimed that this decision was imposed on them ("Nobody else had a choice in it") and constructed democracy as limiting the rights of the Protestant/loyalist community. Perhaps this reflects a sense of precariousness among Protestants in Northern Ireland that the unionist identity and culture is threatened by Irish nationalism (Nic Craith, 2003), as it was argued earlier in Chapter one. This sense of precariousness and threat might inflict on their willingness to grant cultural and national rights to Catholics. Moreover, Murtagh (2018) claimed that the flag protest was partly manipulated by paramilitary groups to reinforce group identities and ethnic loyalties. Thus, the incidence of the flag protest might amplify the students' sense of group identity and loyalty, which can collide with democratic decisions or other group's collective cultural rights.

In general, when the students referred to the reasons for the conflict they concentrated on narratives that portray their community as the victim. The excerpt below exemplifies this:

*S1: Yeah sometimes there have been like Catholic kings who have mistreated Protestants. (Focus group 1, Protestant school)*

Similarly, in the Catholic school one of the teachers pointed to events that they discuss as part of the conflict's history such as the Easter Rising [63] or the case of a Catholic boy who was the victim of a murder motivated by sectarianism:

*They do maybe look at 1916 the Easter Rising but they don't look at the recent conflict, no. (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

[63] See footnote 8.

*[T]here was a Catholic boy who was murdered in Ballymena and it's a great newspaper article that we have on it and we would show what had happened with his friends, who were Protestants (…) we use that to make it a bit more real to them Aline, because sometimes I think my children would be weaker and if you don't make it real, it's very abstract and they can't really understand it. So, if you do things like if you bring in something like that's a newspaper article or the news then it's real. (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

The choice of these examples to teach about the historical conflict and on-going tensions are likely to be uncontroversial in this school. During the focus groups, it became evident that the dominant narratives from their communities influence students' explanations for the recent conflict. Catholic students were specifically conversant about these narratives of which the following excerpts are an example:

*S3: When the British came over they banned speaking Irish and Catholicism. (…) And then it sort of started a political conflict. And then it stopped in the early 90s, mid-80s. (Focus group 4, Catholic school)*

*S1: So, the British decided to come over here and they tried to take our country and we managed to get some of them out but some of them said and because so many people- so many like Irish people got killed from the British. Because the British claimed to have their own country that hatred stays in a lot of people. There is like so many stories where our people got killed by the British and everybody just hates that everybody just thinks like "These people are British, they killed so many of us like get them away!" that's why it is like really tense all the time, especially like right by the [peace] wall. (…) And I know you're just like "It's happened and it's not there it's not the people's now whose fault it is, it's the fault from the British people in the past"- but they still kill so many innocent people! And they know the IRA did it too! I know the IRA did it too! … I know the IRA did kill a lot of them, but the only reason why the IRA was ever made was because they couldn't stay in their own country. Like if they had left us alone nobody would*

*have died, but nobody would have died here like needlessly. (Focus group 3, Catholic school)*

In the last quote, the student (S1) defended the actions of the IRA. She claimed that the killings are a result of the partition and thus minimises the IRA's responsibility, expressing perhaps sympathy with a republican-nationalist narrative of the conflict. This suggests that narratives, which students adopt from their communities are not challenged in the citizenship or history lessons. Their portrayals of the conflict appear one-sided, glorifying battles and violence and conforming the victimhood of their own community. This is reminiscent of research conducted by Barton and McCully (2012), who found that it is difficult for students in Northern Ireland to engage with alternative historical perspectives and reconciling historical narratives they learn from their community with those they learn at school. For teachers, this is a more 'comfortable' position to take than critically examining their own community's role as a perpetrator of violence (Bar-Tal and Halperin, 2013), which can, in turn, contest their students' narratives.

The argument that teachers are inclined to circumvent controversial issues is reinforced by the observation that they themselves have complex and structural understandings of the conflict. They describe "the Troubles" through the politico-historical context of colonisation, discrimination against the indigenous Catholic population, and (political) paramilitary violence. For example, Teacher 2 from the Protestant school referred to the plantation and colonialisation of Ireland as the root of the conflict:

*I think a lot of it was to do with wealth and poverty, as much as anything else. (…) when people are forced to live together in not great conditions, eventually they are going to rebel, you know. … [T]hey were restrained for hundreds of years (...) But there is still a legacy from it and people are still hurt, people don't trust other people, you know, those who have been terrorists and they are now in government. (Teacher 1, Protestant school)*

*[Y]ou had the Protestant community appeared (…) to be getting the good jobs, the best housing and the more investment into the schools. And you had the nationalist community, who was saying "What about us?". And they mobilised and developed*

> *a civil rights movement to fight for their rights. And the conflict I think started at this stage because whenever the British army was being moved in to deal with the violence that started to occur. (…) it wasn't about religion, for me it just was not about religion, it was about protection of cultures. (Vice-Principal, Protestant school)*

In the Catholic school, the teachers' presentations also differ considerably from the students' accounts and are similar to the Protestant teachers' narratives, in that they offer a more balanced and complex account of the conflict. Teacher 2 framed the reasons for the conflict in terms of discrimination and oppression of the Catholic population by the dominant Protestant community that felt the need to protect itself:

> *[Y]ou had one very dominant group politically and I suppose their ethos was to protect their own identity, even if that meant at the expense of the other community. I think that's where it started. The Nationalist community or Catholic (…) sort of felt a lot of their rights were being denied and being overlooked and I suppose at the end a lot of people felt that there is maybe no political situation or political solution to the problem and that's I think where the violence really started. (Teacher 2, Catholic school)*

Teacher 1 from the Catholic school admitted that it is difficult to teach about the conflict without having a sufficient understanding of it, referring to the need for training and education about the conflict for teachers. This suggests that while teachers can draw on their personal experiences to understand the recent conflict there is a lack of training for preparing them to teach about its political and controversial aspects, confirming findings from previous research by Barton and McCully (2012) on history education in Northern Ireland.

In both schools, teachers stressed the importance of challenging students' one-sided narratives and views. Yet, Teacher 2 suggested that there is not enough time allocated and that these issues are only dealt with superficially:

*[Y]ou don't get into massive depth into it you know, but you do listen to their stories and what they're saying, what they have heard and what they have been told you know. But you know also try to show the other side of it too, you know to make them understand that they are not the only victims and the only ones, but you don't judge anybody like saying "Oh they were right" or "they were wrong", you just trying to give like … [a] broader concept, a broader understanding of what it was. (Teacher 2, Catholic school)*

Importantly, the different historical positioning of the Catholic and Protestant community appears to make it more comfortable for the Catholic teacher to teach about central events of the recent conflict. For example, the discriminatory laws (Darby, 1995; McKittrick and McVea, 2012), the civil rights movement and the Hunger Strikes are all events that affected the Catholic community (O'Leary and McGarry, 1993). They have been incorporated into the community's narratives about the conflict and therefore Catholic students are more conversant in topics like equality and human rights, which are unlikely to be perceived as controversial in the classroom. The finding that teachers, students and policymakers from minority groups are readier to explore structural issues related to the conflict occurred across both contexts. Literature about the experiences of Black teachers in the United States brought forward a similar argument, claiming that Black teachers are readier and more conversant to address structural racism and inequality (hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Milner, 2005; Tillmann, 2004). This is one of the central arguments of the thesis and will reoccur in the analysis and discussed in more detail.

In the Protestant school, the vice-principal stated that his students lack knowledge and interest in the conflict. To counter this, he stressed the importance of teaching about it by providing them with more information and challenging the views that they grow up within their families and communities:

*And they have no knowledge of these things, you know and I'm showing them things that they never would have been told about. And it helps them maybe understand now some of the prejudices their parents still have. Or when they hear on the news, people talk about victims and the victims commission and people*

*saying you know "We are victims because my father got murdered and he was a policeman" and they hear on the news somebody else say "Yes, but my husband was murdered and he was an IRA volunteer and he is as much as a victim as your dad, who was a policeman." The children don't understand that. So now whenever they see what their parents went through- there is a better understanding. (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

The excerpts presented in this section show that most teachers have complex understandings of conflict and consider it important to present their students with different perspectives and challenge entrenched views. Yet, students from both schools expressed a sense of victimhood that seems to be influenced by their communities' narratives about the conflict. Protestant students, in particular, suggest that the state, which is commonly ruled by Catholics and Protestants does not protect their cultural, national or unionist identity. Drawing on Bar-Tal et al. (2014) and Bar-Tal and Halperin (2013), communities affected by conflict seek to build their identities on narratives and collective victimhood and the delegitimization of the 'rival' community as a victim. These narratives affect the students' willingness to grant equal cultural rights to the other community or to acknowledge the other community's narrative of the conflict. The accounts of the students, teachers, and principals indicate that teachers generally sidestep addressing the conflict in the classroom. Therefore, the imbalanced political knowledge that young people gain from their families, peers and communities is not adequately challenged. The reasons for teachers' avoidance are more thoroughly explored in Chapter five.

### ISRAEL

In Israel, previous research established that the narrative of the conflict in curricula and textbooks is dominated by a nationalistic (Zionist) perspective (Pappé, 1997; Podeh, 2000; Shohat, 2003). Arab-Palestinian policymakers and students confirmed this impression during the interviews. In the excerpts below are examples where students argued that they only study the conflict from a Zionist perspective, whilst Arab or Palestinian perspectives are marginalised in the curriculum:

*They teach about the conflict from the Zionist perspective. It's like what is in the books, and the case in Israel is that the Arab people learn about the Jew[s], learn about their history, learn Hebrew, about all the Hebrew writers and- but the Arab people don't learn about themselves! (…) Jews don't learn about Arabs, they don't know about Arab people, they don't know about the narrative of the Arab people, they don't learn about society, they don't learn the Arabic language. It's not like they are supposed to learn, it's like Arab people are supposed to learn Hebrew. (Policymaker 5, Israel)*

*You know several historical events like land-day of 1976[64], this is kind of the most important event in the history of the Arab-Palestinian minority in Israel. (…) There is, of course, no talking about the Palestinian characters you know poets, writers, politicians. (Policymaker 1, Israel)*

*[F]or example 97 percent of the Jews according to a poll[65] they don't know about the crimes of the occupation, what is happening in the West Bank yeah. They don't know for example about the confiscation of land. (…) [M]ost of the Jews don't know about it, they don't know about the confiscation of the lands, about the whole struggle of the Palestinians in Israel for their rights (…) (Policymaker 1, Israel)*

Their claim that there is a lack of knowledge among Jewish-Israeli students about the conflict was partly confirmed in the data from the students themselves. In the excerpt below, Jewish-Israeli students referred to historical events to support their argument that the Palestinians are not willing to end the conflict and that they are responsible for the

[64] This event named 'Land day' is commemorated annually by Palestinians to remember the events of 30 March 1976 where Palestinians resisted the Israeli government's decision to expropriate land for reasons of security and settlement.

[65] I could not find the poll he mentioned, but the Israel Democracy Institute published a report in which about 70 per cent of the population reported finding the term 'occupation' inappropriate for Israel's control over the West Bank and Gaza (Hermann et al., 2016), which suggests that they might not be well informed about the events in these areas.

current situation. It becomes clear that they lack detailed knowledge about these events, tweaking facts to bolster their argument[66].

> *S2: Because we gave the Sinai and nothing happened.*
>
> *S1: They continued to fight. … [I]n 1948, we wanted to give them 45 percent of this country but they said no. This is their problem!*
>
> *S4: They want more! Something is not enough.*
>
> *S1: They want more, more, more! And we are more than them, we have six million Jewish people in Israel and they are only 2.5 million. We can't give them more than 50 percent, the maximum. (Focus group 2, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Related to this, students described Israel as the victim of international critique ("they are wrong") and complained that outsiders do not understand their situation:

> *S1: I'm so upset with all the world because everyone is angry about Israel but they don't really understand what is going on here. It's not what really happens and all the people in the BDS [movement] are so crazy because when you-*
>
> *S2: When you live in Israel you can understand-*
>
> *S1: We are so angry about what all the people say about us because it's not right, they are wrong. (Focus group 2, Jewish-Israeli school)*

They mirrored a dominant discourse among the Zionist political elite that depicts Israel as the victim of international institutions and organisations, such as the United Nations (see

[66] The students refer to the events of 1948 when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Resolution 181, which recommended the creation of an independent Jewish (57 per cent) and Arab state (43 per cent). Important to note here is that the Arab population at that time was about double the Jewish population. The plan was recommended by the UN General Assembly and only accepted by the Jewish general agency. The events of the Six-Day war that one student referred to was a conflict between Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Syria and led to the annexation of the Sinai Peninsula by Israel, which was later returned to Egypt in 1978 on the basis of the Camp David Accords. Consequently, the student conflates the Palestinian population with the political leadership of Egypt and ignores the fact that Israeli forces captured the Sinai Peninsula previously. Additionally, the numbers of population that the student cited are incorrect. Altogether the current population in the occupied territories comprises 4.75 million Palestinians, while 1.47 million live in Israel (PCBS, 2015). This number does not include the Palestinian refugees living in other countries, who aspire to return to a future Palestinian state.

for recent examples BBC, 2016; 2017; Beaumont, 2016). Bar-Tal (1998a) argued that these discourses are rooted in historical societal beliefs about the victimisation of Jews and anti-Zionism has been taken as evidence for a continuation of an old anti-Semitism. Societal beliefs about positive self-presentation and self-victimization have been incorporated as part of the national ethos and education to strengthen patriotism and unity, supporting the justification and continuation of the conflict (Bar-Tal, 1998a; 2001).

Compared to their students and reflecting the situation in Northern Ireland, some teachers demonstrated a more balanced and structural understanding of the conflict. Teacher 3 clarified first, that there is a power imbalance between the Israeli and the Palestinian leadership, indicating that the latter is weaker and second, that the conflict is political, referring to the claims of nation states to territory:

> *We both want the same territory for a very very long time and one side is stronger than the other and the other side is very frustrated. And our leaders, unfortunately, don't see it. (…) I don't accept the people who say that "We were here first". First of all, because it is not true! Historically it is not true! We were here together. And both nations want the same territory. So that's what made the conflict. (Teacher 3, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Like in Northern Ireland, teachers seemed to circumvent addressing the conflict in the classroom since the school and the curriculum also do not explicitly encourage discussions about the recent conflict. Teacher 1 from the Jewish-Israeli school lamented the fact that his students have no knowledge about the conflict, which is not surprising, considering that students are not taught about it at school:

> *[T]hey know nothing, they really know nothing. (…) They don't know the history, they don't know what their rights are, they don't know what the Arabs' rights are, they don't know what is happening in the [occupied] territories, or even in Israel,*

*they don't know anything. They don't know where the borders are*[67]*. (Teacher 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Consequently, students in Israel and Northern Ireland can only draw on the information that they gain from their families, communities, peers or media. It was argued earlier that the knowledge that they gain from other subjects like history or geography is shaped by the dominant Zionist narrative. Whilst the interviewed Jewish-Israeli students reproduced a narrative that defends and glorifies the actions of Israeli political leaderships, Arab-Palestinian students rejected the narrative presented in the textbooks on the grounds that it is in their view one-sided:

*S1: It's an important subject [citizenship], but what they teach most of the time doesn't reflect the truth. (Student interview, Arab-Palestinian school)*

*S3: We hear about what happened, but we don't feel what they [Jewish-Israelis] feel. (Focus group 3, Arab-Palestinian school)*

*S1: It's their [Zionist] perspective like they are qualifying the books, they are saying that they are alright, so they don't teach what they don't want us to be, what they don't want us to know. (…)*

*S2: … the government controls the books, so we don't see the whole picture, we only see the side of the picture that we should see. (Focus group 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Generally, Arab-Palestinian policymakers and students argued that perspectives of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the curricula and textbooks are one-sided, which is also supported by previous research (Bar-Tal, 1998b; Firer, 1998; Al-Haj, 2005; Pinson, 2007b; 2013). While the curriculum specifies that students only learn about the 'rifts' in

[67] The lack of knowledge among high school students in Israel regarding the borders has been demonstrated by other studies (Ben-Ze'ev, 2015; Fleishman and Salomon, 2008) outlining that many students do not know where (or even what) the green line is, which Ben-Ze'ev (2015) argues is also the result of contradictory portrayals of the borders by the school curricula. The green line is the term for the border that predates the 1967 war between the State of Israel and the West Bank, which was agreed in the 1949 Armistice agreements between the armed forces involved in the 1948 war.

Israel's society, the Arab-Palestinian teacher implied that there are other 'ways' to address the conflict:

> *[There are m]any ways to express yourself about the conflict. We have something about conflicts in Israel; some of it, there is this conflict between the Jews themselves, and the politics between right and left, and economic and Arabs and Jews, the national conflict between Arabs and Jews. (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school)*

His statement referred to concepts and current issues during the lesson, which allow the discussion of aspects of the conflict, for example, diversity, human rights violations and equality. This will be discussed in more detail in the next section about racism and sectarianism.

Like students from the other three schools, Arab-Palestinians also learn about the (Israeli-Palestinian) conflict outside of school. The principal (cited earlier, page 140) hinted at this when she referred to her students' everyday experiences. During the focus groups with Arab-Palestinians, the conflict was ever-present, even when it was not explicitly the topic of the conversation. When the students talked about themselves or other young people, it became clear that the conflict is an important feature of their everyday reality and how they make sense of the past and the present. Many of them reported their families' narratives and the consequences of the 1948 Israeli-Palestinian war[68], as the excerpts below demonstrate:

> *S1: Yes, we don't want to forget that this house was in the past for a big family that in the war, in … 48, they went to other countries and they left their house. (…) We can't forget this! And some families that I know, my parents' cousins in Jordan, they lived here in 48 and now they want to come to their house, but they can't. (Focus group 4, Arab-Palestinian school)*

[68] The 1948 Israeli-Palestinian war was fought between the State of Israeli and a military coalition between different Arab states following Israel's declaration of independence.

*S2: I think the most important thing to people is to know all about your history. Everything that happened to your grandma and your grandpa. (Focus group 3, Arab-Palestinian school)*

*S3: My grandfather was in the war.*

*S2: Mine too.*

*S3: When they speak about this some of them cry. It's hard for them-*

*S2: It's hard for them but maybe we can learn-*

*S1: From their perspective. (Focus group 3, Arab-Palestinian school)*

This knowledge that they gain from their families and their community presents 'counter-knowledge' that challenges the dominant Zionist narrative about the conflict. For Arab-Palestinian students, this is an alternative way to learn about the conflict and events that the teacher feels restrained to discuss in the classroom. Drawing on these narratives they develop an alternative understanding of the conflict to the Zionist narrative, which is based on the dispossession of land and discrimination:

*S3: Because the Jews came and they stole our land and until now they deal with us on another level like we are Arabs on another level-*

*A: Because you don't have the same rights?*

*S3: Yeah. It's not the same deal, the way they deal with us like they deal with the Jews. (Focus group 3, Arab-Palestinian school)*

However, some students and the teacher referred to the curriculum's narrative about the 'rifts' in Israel's society as the major source of the conflict. It was argued earlier, that this is an avoidance strategy that decontextualizes the conflict, as it glosses over its historical, political, and structural context. The two excerpts below exemplify how the teacher and one of his students described the conflict as being between religions, specifically between Muslims and Jews:

*I think now it [the conflict] is not national, now it's religious between Muslims and Jews. It's not only national because everything is about the religious things. It was maybe before about national, but now it's has become more religious. (…) And now with the prayers in Jerusalem, the Al-Aqsa mosque, so it's not only a national issue, but it takes a religious side. (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school)*

*S1: It's kind of funny because now the problem is not only about Arabs and Jews, it's more like Muslims, Christians, and Jews. (…) (Student interview, Arab-Palestinian school)*

In the light of the recent tensions in the old city of Jerusalem (Berger et al., 2017), one can argue that the religious dimension of the conflict has become more visible. However, describing the conflict as religious overlooks its political dimension, which draws on religion and nationality as ideological resources to justify ownership and belonging to the land. The emphasis on the religious dimension can reflect different understandings of the conflict: on the one hand, these statements reproduce the division strategy employed by the Israeli state, which seeks to widen and exploit the gaps among the Arab population, between Druze, Christians, Muslims, and Bedouins (Lustick, 1980; Yiftachel, 1999). Yet, on the other hand, the recognition that there is a conflict between the different religious groups can point also at the existing gaps among Arab-Palestinians. Christian Palestinians are privileged compared to their Muslim counterparts in Israel in terms of resource allocation and historically they have benefitted from higher educational attainment (Okun and Friedlander, 2005) and higher occupational success[69] (Kraus and Yonay, 2000). Hence, this statement by the Christian teacher could be an expression of superiority that he feels as an Arab-Christian towards Arab-Muslims while he sidesteps addressing the political dimension of the conflict.

Nevertheless, compared to the other schools Arab-Palestinian students demonstrated a more complex understanding of the conflict and seemed generally more politically literate

[69] Kraus and Yonay maintain that members of the Christian community are often preferred among the Jewish-Israeli community, since they are constructed as "closer … to the Western culture they identify with" (p. 531) and thus mirroring racist attitudes towards Muslims that are common in Western cultures (for example Said, 1978).

during the interviews, arguably because they are exposed to different narratives in schools and through their family and community. This exposure to different perspectives allows them to view their own community more critically. For example, they criticised the Palestinian leadership and individual Palestinians that use violence or murder Jewish-Israeli civilians:

> *S3: Also in class, we are saying "you know guys the Arabs are not the poor guys here, they also do-"*
>
> *S2: Some horrible stuff, for example, the Hamas, and the Fatah-*
>
> *S1: Not necessarily, sometimes it's like simple citizens they also-*
>
> *S2: They are trying to defend themselves but they also kill some civilians so it's not cool.*
>
> *S1: And there are lot of Jewish people that are good and nice people and better than Arabs and they know it doesn't necessarily have to be this way.*
>
> *S3: We are not justifying it for anyone.*
>
> *S2: There is no "poor guy" in this conflict. We are both involved in this, but there are some people who are trying to kill- it's like a jungle, like two tigers in a jungle. (Focus group 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Arab-Palestinians students are the only group that voices a clear denunciation of violent political acts by individuals and organisations that claim to represent their community. While most Protestant and Catholic students also seem alienated by violent and criminal actions by the paramilitary groups, they do not openly criticise them. Some Jewish-Israeli students were critical towards the current right-wing government, yet they did not question violent acts committed by their governments or individuals from their community. This lack of criticality could be influenced by the strong notions of nationalism/unionism that these young people are socialised into, which hinders them from criticising or questioning the glorification of their own communities' narratives as Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006) have warned. Referring to Banks (1994) and Jenks et al. (2001) this prevents them from

developing cross-cultural competency since they avoid the critical examination of their own beliefs regarding minority groups' experiences and cultures and how this has determined the development of dominant knowledge, values, and beliefs.

## AVOIDANCE OF STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO RACISM AND SECTARIANISM

This section discusses how the curriculum, schools, teachers, and students define racism and sectarianism. It is connected to the previous section about the conflict as it also elaborates on the difference between cultural-psychological and structural explanations of racism and sectarianism. Chapter one discussed how a structural, anti-essentialist approach to racism frames it as a system of advantage based on race (or religion) (Wellman, 1993). This system of advantage goes beyond problematising prejudice as resulting from a lack of information or contact. Instead, a structural perspective sees racism as being used to justify a political system, institutional policies, and cultural messages that privilege people based on race (or religion) (Dixon et al., 2012; Tatum, 2000). Similarly, Liechty and Clegg (2001) defined sectarianism as connected to a system of power that exists at an individual, communal, and institutional level. This understanding of racism and sectarianism reflects a critical multicultural approach that problematises power and privilege; framing racism as a result of the history of oppression as opposed to conservative and liberal approaches to multiculturalism that individualise and psychologise racism (see McLaren, 1995). Forms of polite or acceptable sectarianism that mask power and accept exclusion have been also criticised since they leave structural sectarianism unchallenged (Liechty and Clegg, 2001). Consequently, racism and sectarianism are linked as they both sustain systems of advantages and privilege.

Chapter two outlined how educational policies tend to promote conservative and liberal approaches to multiculturalism that fail to address the structural nature of racism/sectarianism by framing it as individual prejudice (Gilborn, 2004). Curricula are presented as objective, value-free, colour-blind and omit that students who are privileged

in terms of race, religion, and class benefit most from the current education system (Giroux, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 2005).

In the discussion of the data below, it becomes evident that conservative multiculturalism dominates across all schools. However, in the Arab-Palestinian and to some extent in the Catholic school, teachers and students demonstrate a more critical, structural understanding of racism and sectarianism. This finding is connected to Arab-Palestinians' and Catholics' experience of being part of a minority group that is or was structurally and institutionally discriminated against by state policies and laws. Yet, whilst Arab-Palestinians are currently affected by structural discrimination, Catholics represent a historical minority group that has successfully negotiated legal, political and socio-economic inclusion[70] in Northern Ireland (Ruane and Todd, 1996). Nevertheless, both groups draw on these experiences and narratives to understand the conflict and racism/sectarianism.

## CONSERVATIVE MULTICULTURALISM AT THE POLICY LEVEL

The citizenship curricula in Northern Ireland and Israel include statements promoting diversity, pluralism and/ or mutual understanding. There is vast literature presented in Chapter two (see for example Banks, 2001; 2004; 2008; Gilborn, 2006; Ladson-Billing, 2005) and previous studies in both contexts (see for example Bekerman, 2007; 2016; Donnelly, 2004a; 2004b; 2008) claim that there is a need to carefully assess the impact and effectiveness of educational policies that promote conservative or liberal multiculturalism, which both individualise and psychologise racism and social injustice (McLaren, 1995).

Previous policies in Northern Ireland such as the curricular initiative Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) have been criticised among other concerns for their overemphasis on contact and politeness. It was argued that this has negatively impacted on teachers' and

[70] Depending on the perspective it might be argued that full equality (political, cultural and socio-economic) of both traditions in Northern Ireland requires an Irish dimension, meaning that Irish unity as a goal to be achieved by peaceful means cannot be ruled out and thus given equal weight to the Protestant commitment to the Union (Ruane and Todd, 1996).

students' ability to address issues of division and conflict in the classroom (Gallagher, 2011; McEvoy, 2007; Richardson, 1997; Smith and Robinson, 1992; 1996). Gallagher (2011) stated that there was a danger that ignorant (or sectarian) views were not challenged. Similarly, whilst EMU provided means to address individual prejudice, it did not sufficiently meet the need to approach prejudice and discrimination on a structural level (McEvoy, 2007).

In contrast, it was argued that LGC has a greater potential to provide a structural response to the conflict and sectarianism (McEvoy, 2007). Yet, one policymaker contended that its continuous development and funding is neglected by the political leadership, which focuses on other educational policies such as Shared Education that promotes contact across communities among other purposes:

*[T]he reality of it is, there isn't any [teacher training for citizenship], not from the Education Authority, there might be a small group of [another organisation] (…) they would be more community relations because it's a push to community relations. (…) They are shifting it to this community relations stuff again as opposed to citizenship. (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland)*

He argued that educational policies continue to be dominated by the community relations paradigm and that citizenship education as a form of a structural response does not receive sufficient political support. For him this policy approach becomes evident through the fact that programmes like SE, which he sees as supporting the cultural-psychological approach receive more generous funding (£25 million for SE from the Department of Education and the Atlantic Philanthropies, see DE, 2017a) and political support, while there is a concomitant lack of support for the promotion of citizenship education. The political leadership's tendency to draw on conservative and liberal approaches to multiculturalism influences how schools approach citizenship education, as the next section will demonstrate.

The dominance of conservative and liberal multiculturalism is also reinforced by the inclination of some policymakers to minimise the issue of racism. During the interviews,

some policymakers questioned whether the focus on sectarianism in citizenship education is still relevant:

> *I think more and more schools are becoming increasingly diverse anyway. And maybe sectarianism isn't the biggest issue, maybe it's racism, it's homophobia, it's those other types of things that are coming in. (…) [T]he values system there is about valuing diversity and promoting diversity and celebrating it. (Policymaker 1, Northern Ireland)*

He claimed that racism and homophobia are perhaps more pressing issues than sectarianism since schools are becoming more diverse in Northern Ireland. Additionally, he suggested that these issues should be addressed by promoting and celebrating diversity, framing it as a form of conservative or liberal multiculturalism (see McLaren, 1995). Whilst racism is indeed a concerning issue in Northern Ireland (Knox, 2011), sectarianism continues to affect Northern Ireland's society (Engel, 2017; NASUWT, 2016). Knox's (2011) study found a link between racist and sectarian attitudes in Northern Ireland. Both ideologies have historically sustained a system of advantage in Northern Ireland (and beyond) and thus refer to the same problem of oppression and privilege. It will be discussed below that minimising sectarianism is an avoidance strategy that is reproduced by schools and teachers.

It was argued earlier in Chapter one that historically educational policies in Israel were characterised by attempts to assimilate and to exclude parts of the population (Abu-Saad, 2004; Dahan and Levy, 2000). Even though the curriculum promotes values of pluralism and tolerance (Ichilov, 2003), this happens under the umbrella of (European) Zionist dominance. Eventually, this can lead to a dilution of structural racism and discrimination. Arab-Palestinian policymakers criticised that the Ministry of Education does not address the issue of racism in educational policies. Similar to teachers from minority groups, these policymakers might be more aware of the lack of education against racism (hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Tillmann, 2004):

> *Officially there is no[t] something called "conflict", or racism according to Ministry of Education. Even though there was a programme few years ago for*

> *education against racism and it was cancelled. (…) Because this is part of the policy that … they say that "we should increase Jewish education. And we should increase Zionist education." We, on the other side, say, "we should increase citizenship education, we should increase education against racism". So, they don't actually recognise that there is a problem of racism. (Policymaker 1, Israel)*

In Chapter one, it was argued that there is a tendency to address racism through the prism of anti-Semitism (Rosenberg, 2013, cited in Cohen, 2017). Another policymaker referred to this in the following excerpt, explaining that the focus is laid on anti-Semitism instead of racism as a broader phenomenon:

> *[I]n civic education in Israel they don't learn about racism. They don't learn about racism! It's not part of the formal education programme … It's an extra if they want to do it, they do but it's not- they don't have it in civics or in another important [subject]. They teach about anti-Semitism, but they don't learn about racism as a universal phenomenon. They don't learn about racism against other people for example … it's a choice. (Policymaker 5, Israel)*

The framing of racism largely as anti-Semitism is supported by a review of the textbook for citizenship education (Ministry of Education, 2017a). When racism[71] is mentioned in the text it refers to laws against incitement, anti-Semitism, the context of the United States or the argument that nationalism and Judaism do not promote racism. Arguably the oppression of Jewish people throughout history is a good example of racism. Yet, focusing only on the victimhood of Jewish people strengthens the dominant Zionist discourse and narrative (Porat, 2004; Resnik, 2003) and essentialises racism as a particular experience of the Jewish people, perhaps omitting its universal and structural character as a system of advantage (McLaren, 1995; Tatum, 2000; Wellman, 1993). Therefore, this as an avoidance strategy to circumvent addressing structural racism in Israel and it will be demonstrated below how it is reproduced by teachers and students.

[71] Translated from Hebrew [גזענות].

Contact initiatives that bring together Jewish-Israelis and Arab-Palestinians mainly rely on the support of committed non-governmental organisations, educational institutions or individuals. Some policymakers recount from their own experience of these meetings that there are also various practical issues with these encounters such as a lack of preparation and follow-up sessions. For policymaker 2 these shortcomings could be also attributed to the lack of political and institutional support:

> *I learned that the percentage of students that do it in schools is very very low. It's very, very complicated and sometimes even schools that do it, they treat this as something that has to be done (…). And sometimes they bring the students to these meetings with really no good preparation and with no really good discussion afterwards, like analysing and reflecting that. And without that, it's like you know it's something which is more like folklore meetings, it's not really something deep. (Policymaker 4, Israel)*

> *And most of the programmes for co-existence, it's from the NGOs [name of NGOs] and they are small programmes. It's like all the year they learn about something and one or two days, they have a meeting with the other group. They don't know anything about this group and they don't understand. And sometimes because they don't know, the effect of these activities is negative. (…) it's a small activity for some schools that believe in democracy, but most of the schools they don't have this. (Policymaker 5, Israel)*

During the interviews, it became clear that these encounters are permeated by the structural issues that dominate politics in Israel, which is well documented in studies about the bilingual schools (Bekerman, 2005; 2016). For example, many Arab-Palestinian participants emphasised that encounters with Jewish-Israelis had become especially difficult during times of political tensions, such as the Intifada or the recent Gaza war.

Another Arab-Palestinian policymaker criticised these encounters as a fairly superficial form of contact. Importantly, he suggested that these encounters should promote equality, democratic values, and knowledge about the 'other' side that goes beyond the stereotypes propagated by the media:

> *So sometimes we say that "Ok we are not against co-existence, but co-existence exists when the two parts exist, not that one part exists above- it should be kind of equal". So, we are not against it but still- (…) There are conditions, it's not like "ok we will come and play soccer together and eat lunch and go back" if it does promote more understanding if it does promote equality if it does promote democratic values, so it's very positive (…) No soccer game can be part of it, but it's not the only thing. Like for example most of the Jewish population, the Jewish youth, they do not know anything at all about Arabs [except] the things they get from the media. (Policymaker 1, Israel)*

Since policymakers argued that most contact initiatives do not go beyond the facilitation of contact, none of these initiatives, nor the curriculum in citizenship and history that concentrates mainly on teaching about anti-Semitism provides a structural response to the conflict or racism in Israel.

In the following section, I split the part about conservative multiculturalism as an avoidance strategy into a section for each school, because each school frames this avoidance strategy differently, reflecting their own community ethos.

### PROTESTANT SCHOOL: MINIMISING SECTARIANISM AND CONSERVATIVE MULTICULTURALISM

In general, teaching about sectarianism and identity in the Protestant school is characterised by an overemphasis on racism and a conservative/liberal multicultural approach that defines racism as a result of individual prejudice and lack of contact. Like the policymakers [cited in the section above] Protestant teachers and the vice-principal belittle sectarianism as a problem. For example, the vice-principal in the Protestant school suggested that teaching about racism has become more relevant:

> *[A]ll of the training that I went on … it was about sectarianism, that was the key focus. Now, to be truthful with you, from 2004 to 2005, now to 2006, those areas are no longer as relevant. So, the children in the class don't struggle as much as with what we refer to as "the other side", you know, most our kids come from Protestant working-class families, they don't really seem to have any issues now*

*with Catholic working-class families. Our problem now, in terms of what you teach is about ethnic minority groups. (…) they would have been very racist. (…) I think Northern Ireland has changed- (…) whenever I started teaching here and I would be teaching about diversity in Northern Ireland, I would have had symbols of the- Irish symbols you know. Now, the kids aren't interested (…). In terms of the sectarian divide, it's pretty much not there now. (…) the kids in my class don't have a clue, I could have put up pictures of political representatives of the you know Sinn Fein, which would have been the Republican party and our kids back then in [the previous school] would say, oh yes that's Gerry Adams, oh yes that's Martin McGuiness, they would know. (…) And they would have been figures of hate. I would put up a picture of Martin McGuiness now and he's Deputy First Minister, our kids couldn't tell who he is, they wouldn't have a clue. (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

He rightfully described growing racism towards other minorities in Northern Ireland as a concerning issue (Knox, 2011). However, he separated teaching about sectarianism and racism, not recognising the obvious link between the two as systems of advantages. Emphasising racism over sectarianism in Northern Ireland is a complex avoidance strategy and ignores that sectarianism is a form of racism (McVeigh; 1998; McVeigh and Rolston, 2007). Framing this problem solely in terms of racism ignores the historical legacy of sectarianism as a system of advantage in Northern Ireland. Despite teachers' structural understanding of sectarianism and the conflict outlined above, they avoid transmitting this to their students.

Instead, their teaching approach to racism reflects cultural-psychological understandings of it that frame racism as the result of individual prejudice and a lack of information about other 'cultures'. In the following excerpt, one teacher explained how she challenges stereotypes through the celebration of different cultures. Interestingly, she avoided using the term racism:

*No, they [majority group students] don't think about it [racism] very often, you know. It becomes more of a – I don't want to say an issue – but some negative – I*

*mean it's been heightened more because we have a lot of what we call newcomer children in school. So, you have people, who are from Poland, who are from Romania, who are from Africa, different parts of Africa, and you know there have been tensions because unfortunately there would be children that say they're coming here to take our jobs that type of thing. And they tend to stereotype them and put them all in one group, so it's trying to – again broaden the mind and get them used to working with each other and to bring the newcomers in, so they feel part of it and we can celebrate their diversity, their culture as well. (Teacher 1, Protestant school)*

Her approach was praised by the vice-principal as a good example of using 'active learning strategies'[72]:

*[Teacher 1] for example … was looking at for example differences in society and one of things she did was she brought in home-made meals, like there was a Chinese dish and there was a Japanese dish and an Italian dish and she brought these meals in and brought the kids around and "Let's eat and let's talk about the different- you know why would they eat a lot of rice in these countries and why they would eat a lot of pasta". So, we – very much about active learning, as opposed to "Here is the textbook and this is what it says about Europe read that there and answer these questions". (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

Active learning is understood as going beyond more traditional teaching methods such as memorisation and summarising, meeting different people inside and outside the classroom as well as different activities during the lesson. While 'active learning' in the curriculum refers to the facilitation of discussions and mind mapping (CCEA, 2000a), the examples given by the teachers convey only superficial ideas about multiculturalism, following the credo of 'celebrating difference' and not addressing issues of racism in a more critical manner. I observed one lesson by Teacher 1, where she sought to encourage students to think about the situation of refugees and to take their perspective, drawing on active

[72] The curriculum at key stage three and four sets a pedagogical focus on what it calls "active learning" strategies (CCEA, 2000a :12 (key stage three); CCEA, 2015b) and citizenship has been identified as a suitable subject to draw on these methods.

learning strategies (she mapped out the journey of the refugees and students had to follow this path imagining themselves as being a refugee). While the perspective-taking method seemed to get students to think about the refugee's experience from a different angle, the lesson felt a bit rushed and there was no time to discuss the situation of refugees after they arrived in the UK or Europe. It focused on encouraging compassion and understanding among the students but did not address structural issues of discrimination and racism that refugees experience in Western Europe. Whereas active learning strategies can provide a valuable alternative pedagogy that goes beyond traditional approaches of studying textbooks and memorisation, these examples demonstrate that it can be used as an avoidance strategy that distracts from engaging critically with the concepts of human rights, sectarianism, and racism.

Similarly, racism was also described as resulting from a lack of contact. The vice-principal described contact as an important tool to challenge students' stereotypes and he claimed that the best way to learn about 'difference' is to bringing people from different backgrounds together:

> *[T]he best approach, whenever you want to deal with difference is to bring the difference together. (…) you know when you are dealing with diversity and inclusion of ethnic minorities, bring ethnic minorities in and let them speak about how they feel and let them speak about their experiences. (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

Again, framing racism as stemming from a lack of contact and information ignores its structural character as a system of advantage. Consequently, despite their structural understandings of sectarianism, teachers in the Protestant school formulate racism according to cultural-psychological understandings and conservative multiculturalism.

Another strategy of avoidance among citizenship teachers in the Protestant school is to approach the conflict through the teaching of interpersonal conflict resolution strategies that are developed within the classroom rather than referring explicitly to the political conflict. This strategy is outlined in the following excerpt:

> *Yes, [we teach about the conflict] and conflict resolution. We tend to do a lot more of that with the old[er] ones in GCSE, it is an actual part of the syllabus. So, you have to look at, you know things like mediation, things like how people resolve conflict, so we do some like that as well. (Teacher 2, Protestant school)*

Importantly, the teacher also explained that this approach to conflict resolution is part of the curriculum. McEvoy (2007) has raised concerns about this "future-oriented" approach in the citizenship curriculum, which makes it easier for teachers to avoid contentious issues (p.147). It is less contentious for the teacher to approach the topic of conflict by introducing them to conflict resolution skills. Similarly, the same teacher also described that she teaches about the conflict in a global context, referring to wars and conflicts in other places such as Rwanda. Again, this sidestepping is facilitated by the flexibility of the curriculum that affords teachers the autonomy to circumvent contentious but important aspects.

Niens and Reilly (2012) have warned about the potential of avoidance in their research. They argue that even though education for global citizenship has been successful in raising awareness among students about global issues, they were unable to draw connections between global and local issues within their own community and country. According to Niens and Reilly, this stems from a tendency among teachers to circumvent discussions about remaining inequality and power imbalances in Northern Ireland.

## CATHOLIC SCHOOL: BETWEEN CRITICAL AND CONSERVATIVE MULTICULTURALISM

The approach to sectarianism in the Catholic school differs from the Protestant school. The different approaches to teaching about sectarianism seem to be connected to the teachers' and the students' background as a historically oppressed minority in Northern Ireland. Whilst politically and legally Catholics in Northern Ireland are granted now equal status, their understandings of themselves as a community are connected to the experience of structural sectarianism as a form of oppression and disadvantage. The Catholic teachers' understandings of the conflict are similar to those described by the Protestant

teachers. Yet, Catholic teachers are provided with a safer and more comfortable environment to address examples of oppression in the context of structural sectarianism in Northern Ireland in their classroom, since these resonate with the students' narratives about their families and community.

During the focus groups, Catholic students referred to events and aspects central to the history of oppression of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, such as religion, Irish nationality, the IRA, British rule, and "the Troubles" in terms of identities that are important to young people (see Figure 14; 15 and 16). One student told in the focus group how her uncle took part in the Hunger Strikes. Moreover, there are two memorials near the school, reminding of people who died in the Hunger Strike and who were killed during "the Troubles". By growing up in this community that continues to commemorate events of the recent conflict, Catholic students seemed more mindful that sectarianism is still an issue in Northern Ireland of which the following excerpt is an example:

*S3: Yeah and it is still going, a lot of prejudice.*

*A: You think it's still going on?*

*S2: Like when the Protestants march it goes like a wee bit-*

*A: Oh yeah like 12th July-*

*S3: And then they are trying to cover up murders.*

*S2: And bombings. (…) You see with the Troubles and what happened hundred years ago, it's still going on today. (Focus group 4, Catholic school)*

They also described citizenship education as having an important role in addressing the conflict between Catholics and Protestants:

*A: And do you think actually that citizenship is an important subject?*

*S4: Especially here like.*

*S1: Yeah over in Ireland.*

*A: What do you mean like especially-*

*S1: Like to help us get on cause like usually there is a lot of controversy between us and Protestants so like if we learn more about it and we like both say "let's come together" and it's not as bad as it is. (Focus group 1 Catholic-Irish school)*

Due to the responsiveness on part of their students to these events, it is not surprising that Catholic teachers are perhaps more confident in addressing the local context in their LGC lesson. Thus, Teacher 1 argued that there is not enough emphasis on the local context, countering the avoidance of the local context that is promoted on the policy level:

*Maybe there is not as much emphasis on local issues as global, maybe. Obviously, you could re-do the racism you could look at racism in Northern Ireland and you can look at sectarianism in Northern Ireland, so you know. But I think it is more important to children to see their own community before they start looking out, maybe. (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

She referred to the problem that racism tends to be addressed by looking at segregation and the civil rights movement in the United States, while it is obviously an issue in Northern Ireland itself. However, like the teachers from the Protestant school, she also suggested that sectarianism has become less relevant despite admitting that it is still a problem:

*Sectarianism … obviously, it is a big thing here and you know our children would be divided you know because we are a Catholic school (…) I think it still is an issue but maybe not as much as it used to be, I would like to think. (…) You know is it because of the education that they are not as bigoted as they used to be? You know but then you look at the news and you know- it's going on still! (…) It could be because a lot of my children where they come from- they just stay in their own area. So, you know they don't maybe mix a lot with other people you know. (Teacher 1, Catholic School)*

The other Catholic teacher stressed the connection between sectarianism, racism, and homophobia, referring to the challenges of countering students' stereotypes and the importance of addressing the recent conflict:

> *You know it can work, it's gonna be a slow process you know because sectarianism was so rife in Northern Ireland for so long. (…) You know you can't skim over or try to brush it all under the carpet because it did happen, it [the recent conflict] lasted for 40 years! And I think if they [the students] could maybe understand or see how that has developed, it might help them to deal with the new challenges the like of the homophobia and the like of the racism and say "look there was a model of something that was really bad and has improved, now this is the next problem, can you take some of those ideas and bring it into that situation and help to resolve it." (…) sectarianism was there and now it's sort of in the wane, but there are new issues coming out, the likes of racism, the likes of homophobia, all these sort of things and they still have to be addressed. (Teacher 2, Catholic school)*

Yet, in the following descriptions of how they address sectarianism and racism in the classroom, it becomes evident that their teaching is also mostly limited to a cultural-psychological approach. Teacher 1 described how she addresses sectarianism and racism by drawing on 'active learning strategies':

> *[W]e would look at the topic of you know looking at racism, sectarianism and then I would get them to design a superhero, somebody who is going to save the world and stop racism, stop sectarianism and the children love it Aline! Yeah, they do their drawings and then they design like a super-power they give them a slogan, they give them you know all of these things. (…) They learn about the racism, what it is, what are the causes of it, what are the consequences of it, and how can it be tackled. (…) [W]e would do like "show racism the red card" (…) [it's a] campaign on football and the children- (…) they [the English team] had quite a few black players and the Spanish supporters were making monkey chants and there is a great clip on it. It makes it very real to the children (…) a lot of children in school*

*don't really see them as being black or different you know, they are just footballers! (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

Other examples of teaching about racism she referred to were activities like 'People Bingo', the 'Diversity map' (which is part of the official curriculum material) and a card-sorting activity, where students are asked to match people's faces with their hobbies and areas where they live. These approaches commonly address racism/sectarianism as individual prejudice instead of approaching them as structural issues. Statements made by the other teacher also suggest that there is a tendency to approach racism as individual prejudice since he claimed that racism did not exist in Northern Ireland until a few years ago because there was no immigration. This statement stands in contrast with his earlier quote (see page 181) where he argued that racism and sectarianism are linked:

*[S]o but we never addressed the likes of homophobia, racism [in the initial teacher training]- there was no racism in Northern Ireland because nobody would come to Northern Ireland! (Teacher 2, Catholic school)*

McVeigh (1998) has commented on the common denial of racism in Northern Ireland. He exposed the claim that there is no racism in Northern Ireland due to the absence of minorities as racist by itself because it suggests that the presence of minorities causes racism instead of viewing it as a social construct by society. This refers to an understanding of racism as a cultural-psychological issue, instead of a historical concept to sustain power and privilege (McLaren, 1995; Tatum, 2000; Wellman, 1993). McVeigh concluded that this denial of racism in Northern Ireland is not a sign of its absence, but the absence of a discussion about racism. The dilution of racism through conservative and liberal multiculturalism in the Protestant and Catholic school sustains his argument.

This section demonstrated that there is a greater tendency among Catholic teachers and students to frame sectarianism and the conflict in terms of structural explanations. This arguably stems from the historical positioning of the Catholic community as having suffered under structural and institutional sectarianism. However, when it comes to racism, teachers also tend to frame it as the result of individual prejudice. Therefore, while the assumed prevalence of racism over sectarianism is used as an excuse not to address

sectarianism, the data suggest that neither structural racism or sectarianism are actually addressed.

### JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL: FOCUS ON ANTI-SEMITISM AND ASSIMILATION

The section above referred to the danger that racism might be only discussed in relation to anti-Semitism, which narrows the issue of racism and restricts a fuller discussion of the issue. For example, Teacher 3 decided to confront her students with the problem of racism towards Ethiopian Jews instead of Black people in Israel in general. She invited a friend from a (Jewish) Ethiopian background who works as an officer in the military, to share with the students his experiences of racism:

> *[F]or some of the kids it was the first time for them to even hear or meet someone who came from Ethiopia and some of them don't know the difference between a refugee from Kenia and a Jew that came from Ethiopia. (…) Some were in shock because he told them that when he and his wife wanted to buy a new apartment and they spoke on the phone and arranged to meet the owner … and they knocked on the door and he opened the door and he saw them- and he closed the door. And this happened this year and not in the Middle Ages- and it [racism] is there, it exists. (Teacher 3, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Her choice to focus on the experience of racism by a Black Jew might appear to be simply a choice of convenience because she could draw on the help of a friend. Yet, she also emphasised the difference between Ethiopian Jews and (non-Jewish) refugees, suggesting perhaps that the former is a more 'legitimate' member of Israel's society. There appears to be a preference to refer to examples of racism where Jews are the victims, even though in this case Jews are also the perpetrators of racism. This argument is reinforced by the quote below from another teacher who explained that Jewish-Israelis view antiracism as part of their ethos:

> *T1: Yeah because nobody wants to admit [being racist]. To be a racist is in Israel, more than any other state in the world, it is the worst thing that you can be because*

*you spoke about ethos, our ethos is about the Holocaust. So, and our ethos is that we suffered from racism, so in Israel, most of the people won't admit to themselves that they are racist and they will be very very offended if you will call them a racist.*

*A: I see because it's somehow part of their identity-*

*T1: Yeah part of our identity! (Teacher 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

While the school's emphasis on the ethos of the Holocaust certainly teaches a lesson against anti-Semitism, it presents it as a particularity, overlooking the obvious connection to other examples of racism as systems of advantage. Consequently, they are also unable to see the connection between Jewish immigration and other immigrants such as non-Jewish guest workers or refugees. During the focus groups, students described the latter as causing problems and illegitimate immigrants, while Jewish immigration is legitimated through the law of return[73]:

*S4: But there are some people who really come to Israel because they love Israel and they are Jewish and they want to be in a Jewish country. (…) Because they feel like it's a holy country so they like to go to Jerusalem and live there. (…) They come really because there is a reason. (Focus group 4, Jewish-Israeli school, Year 9)*

They referred to a special right or privilege that Jews should receive due to their religious connection to the land and the oppression caused by anti-Semitism. Drawing on this special privilege, they assert that other citizens or immigrants receive unequal treatment. For example, in the following excerpt, they justified that citizenship and the state's identity is Jewish:

*A: Is there something about citizenship that causes trouble? Or is everything great about citizenship?*

*S3: No, the Arabs don't think that.*

[73] The Law of return was passed in 1950, granting Jews the right to come and live in Israel and to gain Israeli citizenship.

*S4: [T]hey don't give citizenship to everybody. And if you are born in Israel, if you are not Jewish, you don't get it. And in the United States, if you are born there, you get citizenship.*

*S2: If you are Jewish, I think you have to live three years in Israel and then you can get-*

*S1: But it's ok it's a Jewish country. (Focus group 4, Jewish-Israeli school, Year 9)*

Therefore, Jewish-Israeli students reproduce a republican understanding of citizenship that foregrounds obedience and commitment to the community (Faulks, 2000; Heater, 1990), which is also supported by the fact that military service as an essential aspect of citizenship in their drawings (see Figure 19;20;21;22 and 23). They partly reproduce an 'ethnic' concept of citizenship that determines 'Jewish' as a 'master identity' as Mouffe (1993) described it, and an exclusive notion of belonging based on 'ethnicity' (Ghanem et al., 1998; Shafir and Peled, 2002; Yiftachel, 2006; Smooha, 1997). This understanding of citizenship is reminiscent of strategic essentialism (Spivak, 1988), since historically (and to some extent still today) Jews as an oppressed minority draw on essentialism as part of their political struggle, reclaiming their identity.

Arab-Palestinian policymakers argued earlier that racism is not addressed in the educational policies in Israel. Some teachers in the Jewish-Israeli school reproduce this 'blindness' in regard to racism. One teacher claimed that there is no 'gap' between Mizrachim and Ashkenazim in the school:

*And the situation [division or gap] of the Mizrachim-Ashkenazim is not seen, we don't feel it here in this school. (Teacher 2, Israeli-Jewish school)*

However, racism by white, European Jews towards Jews from Mizrachi, Sephardi or African backgrounds, which is documented in the literature (Offer, 2004; Shalom Chetrit, 2010) is also prevalent in the school. During the focus group activities, students described Mizrachim by relying on 'oriental' stereotypes (see Said, 1978). Mizrachim were labelled as being interested in sports, partying, Mizrachi men as dominant and as having low-paid

jobs. In contrast, Ashkenazim were portrayed as hardworking, intellectual, focused on money and career-oriented (see Figure 24 'Mizrachi citizens' represented on the left and 'Ashkenazi citizens' on the right).

The section below will show that Arab-Palestinians are portrayed in similar terms as Mizrachim when Ashkenazim contrast 'European' and 'Arab' culture. Additionally, negative and racist portrayals of Arab-Palestinians (and Muslims in general) are often used to justify the 'security' measures that limit their freedom and rights (Abu-Saad, 2004). Interestingly, one of the Jewish-Israeli teachers referred to this in the following excerpt:

> *[I]n Israel, racism is out[…] of … question, everybody agrees that racism is not good. You have to manipulate them in order to show them they are racist. (…) Even when they speak about Arabs, they will say these things, not from a racist-maybe they are racist in their heart, but when they speak about it, they will speak about it from the security point of view. (…) they will speak about security … "of course I believe everybody is equal and should get equal rights, but it's very dangerous with them because they want-"*
>
> *A: "They want to kick us out"?*
>
> *T1: Exactly! And so, I believe most of them are racist, but most of them will hide it from themselves. (Teacher 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

These racist attitudes that the teacher described also surfaced during the focus groups. The students suggested that Muslims (Arabs) pose a threat to Jews in other countries and the 'terror' caused by them is a reason why many Jews immigrate to Israel:

> *S5: And we know that we don't have any other place, because in the world people hate us and in here it's good. (…)*
>
> *S5: We saw a lot of people in the last year that came to Israel because of all the terror and things like that and just here they feel safe.*
>
> *S4: Because in every place there are Muslims so. (Focus Group 4, Jewish Israeli school, Year 9)*

The students described Israel (from their point of view) as the only safe country for Jewish people, a Zionistic lesson from the Holocaust that remains common also among young people (Lazar et al., 2008).

Yet, while the teacher criticised his students' racist attitudes, later during the interview, he resorted to the same discourse when he described his (left-wing) students as too naïve for believing in a two-state solution[74]:

> *So also, the Palestinians are saying "our goal is to kick you all out of Palestine!" (…) as I told you that many of my left[-wing] students don't know what they are talking about, they think that if we will give them a state "oh everybody will be happy and that's the solution." But it's not like that because even though you will give them a state they will still want you to kick you out to the sea. And they say it! And they say it and they teach it in their schools. (…) They [his students] are very good children, they want to be friends with everybody, "we will give them some[thing], so everything will be ok." (Teacher 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

This statement demonstrates how the teacher reproduces the same argument that compromising with the Palestinians in the two-state solution will lead to the expulsion or killing of Jewish-Israelis. In his previous statement, he exposed exactly this argument as racist among his students, being unaware that he expressed similar views.

Besides this description of Arab-Palestinians as the enemy and a security threat to the Israeli state, teachers reproduce other 'orientalist' stereotypes. In the following quote, the same teacher referred to the challenges for meetings with Arab-Palestinians, singling out the behaviour of Arab-Palestinian boys towards the other sex as a major barrier:

> *[I]t's not that easy [these meetings] because as I told you there are much more barriers for us. …[M]ost of my female students are wearing the same thing you wear [pointing and me wearing a T-shirt that exposed part of my shoulders]. And if you will go to the Arab society, the boys will really like you … but it will take*

[74] The term "two-state solution" refers to the potential solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the establishment of two independent states: the State of Israel and the State of Palestine.

*less than an hour of free time until someone will put his hand on you, ok. And our girls do not understand why … because they grow up "My body is- I can wear whatever I want." And you won't even dare to stare! (…) it's really difficult for an Arab guy that saw a woman who walks around like that but only in specific kind of movies that he saw on his computer on late night- And he knows what this woman- what happens. So it is always when there is free time in the contact between Israeli-Arabs and- always there are problems. (Teacher 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

This teacher portrayed Arab-Palestinian men as aggressive and traditionalist drawing on racist and orientalist stereotypes that Jewish-Israelis are socialised with through the media, literature, film, public discourse and education (Bar-Tal and Teichmann, 2005). Bar-Tal and Teichmann state that the analysis of school textbooks also shows that "(…) over the years, generations of Israeli Jews have been socialized in light of the negative, derogating, and often delegitimizing view of the Arabs." (p.175). Therefore, it is perhaps not overly surprising that the students and their teachers reproduce these images. In the following excerpt, the same teacher also emphasised that there are essential differences between Arab-Palestinians and Jewish-Israelis, outlining a clear distinction between 'us' and 'them':

*In Israel, they don't look like us, they don't behave like us, we don't understand what they say, and most of the pupils here never saw an Arab kid or adult. The same about Palestinians, the only Israelis they have seen are settlers or soldiers. (Teacher 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

The principal further contrasted Arab-Palestinians with Jewish-Israelis, describing the latter as more 'European', which reminds of the colonialist rhetoric of 'civilised' white Europeans who described Arab culture as inferior and backwards (see Fanon, 2008/1952; Said, 1978):

*I think that the culture difference between them and us is too great [big]. We are like a European people, you know Western people and they are like Arabs and it's different- really different. (Principal, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Their reliance on stereotypes is reminiscent of what McLaren (1995) defined as conservative multiculturalism, based on white colonialist, racist attitudes, and essentialised identity constructions that rely on fixed images of identity and culture (Fanon, 2008/1952; Hall, 2000). Said (1978) explained these identity constructions were in the past (and arguably are still) underpinned by a political colonialist project, in this case, to justify the Zionist hegemony, which is reproduced by the students and teachers in their descriptions of 'the other'.

These racist images of Mizrachim and Arab-Palestinians are combined with a strategy of assimilation. Students reproduced this strategy of assimilation of Jews from different backgrounds, describing Israel as a 'melting pot' for Jewish people:

> *S2: [F]rom all of the places the Jews come and we become one part. (…)*
>
> *S1: Israel it's everything in one, it's like Jewish together-*
>
> *S2: Yeah, we make them become one. We don't split them because we are together. (Focus group 4, Jewish-Israeli school, Year 9)*

Al-Haj (2002) exposed the idea of the melting pot as "a cover for an ideology of assimilation dominated by Whites" (p.93), wherein the case of Israel the (white) Ashkenazi culture presents the dominant norm. Hence, students rely on a discourse which has historically demanded assimilation into a predominantly Ashkenazi (European) culture (Shohat, 2003; Swirski, 1999).

Even though Arab-Palestinians are generally targeted by the Israeli state with a strategy of exclusion from political and socio-economic resources (Abu-Saad, 2004; Ghanem, 2010; Lustick, 1980; Rouhana and Ghanem, 1998; Smooha, 1990; Yiftachel, 1999), they are also partly addressed through an assimilation strategy. The students reproduced these strategies in the focus group by describing Arabs as their 'cousins'; while elsewhere during the interview they described them as 'terrorists':

> *S2: The Arabs are also a big part of our life.*
>
> *S3: The what?*

*S2: The Arabs. The cousins- what it's called.*

*S4: Because all our life we are always talking about Jewish and Arabic all the time.*

*S2: Palestinians and Arabs.*

*S1: And we are protecting them. (Focus group 4, Jewish-Israeli school, Year 9)*

In the last statement one student claimed that they (Jewish-Israelis) are protecting Arab-Palestinians, which is reminiscent of the Zionist historical narrative presented in the textbooks that Palestinians were protected during the events of 1948 (see Podeh, 2000) and the discourse in Israeli society that seeks to justify policies such as the occupation or the discrimination of Arab-Palestinian citizens, arguing that they have a better life in Israel and under the occupation than in other (Arab) countries (for this discourse see Heller, 2017). Therefore, it seems that these students reproduce this discourse as part of justifying Israel's policies towards Arab-Palestinians.

It is interesting that the students claimed that they speak about Jews and Arabs "all the time" and that they are "a big part" of their lives, while policymakers, teachers, and other students suggest that young Jewish-Israelis and Arab-Palestinians rarely encounter each other. Perhaps, it indicates an interest to discuss and learn more about the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians in the classroom. This could be a result of the general lack of discussing diversity in the classroom, suggested by one teacher who argued that teaching about identity is not sensitive or controversial in this school since the student population is very homogenous and the students are not aware of the issues related to diversity within Israel's society:

*It's not so sensitive because the students are very homogen[eous] (…) [If] I [would] teach students that are not Jewish, they are Muslims so they are not Jewish, then it is sensitive. Then a little bit- but the students are homogenic, so it's not a problem to teach it in this school. In [another adjacent town with a more diverse (mainly Jewish) population] it will be more of a problem. … [T]here are Ethiopians, there are Russians, there are poor people- here it is homogen[eny] …*

> *it's a problem that we are not part of Israeli society. It's a problem! They recognise the problem […] of the society in Israel only in the army. Here, they don't know the problematic. They don't feel it- only in theory. (Teacher 2, Jewish-Israeli school)*

He described how teaching about diversity remains uncontroversial in this school, where most students come from a more affluent, Jewish (Ashkenazi) background and do not get to meet other societal groups before they start their military service. Yet, this is reminiscent of McVeigh's (1998) argument that racism or diversity is not controversial in this school not because it is absent, but because it is not discussed. Teacher 2 claimed that the students understand diversity and racism only during their military service, where they mix with people from different groups of Israel's society, except for Arab-Palestinians who do (usually) not enlist. His cultural-psychological understanding of racism is similar to Teacher 2 from the Catholic school since they both describe racism only as existing in a diverse society.

In general, teachers and students reproduce the curriculum's approach of the 'rifts' in Israel's society or as "The Challenges of Co-existence[75] in Israeli Society" (Ministry of Education, 2017a:495). These challenges were also addressed during the citizenship lesson and activities that I observed, which dealt mainly with the political gaps between conservative and left-wing Zionists in Israel and the role of right-wing extremism. While the teachers used the method of perspective-taking to encourage students to reflect on the views of different groups in Israel's society, they did not refer to the conflict or Arab-Palestinian perspectives. This suggests perhaps that the topic "The Challenges of Co-existence in Israeli Society" tends to focus on the diversity and challenges among the Jewish population and avoids addressing the situation of Arab-Palestinians in Israel.

Moreover, this approach towards "co-existence" is devoid of analysing structures of power and domination that sustain racism. Instead, teachers and students frame racism or stereotypes as resulting from a lack of contact with other groups. Teacher 3 and Teacher

[75] See page 173-4 for critical discussion about 'co-existence' as an empty signifier, which resonates with the depolitised understanding of racism.

2 confirmed this impression during the interviews, as outlined earlier in this section. The students reproduce these forms conservative and liberal multiculturalism, illustrated by the quotes above and by the drawings from their focus groups in which they refer to stereotypes (see Figure 25; 27 and 28).

However, despite the socialisation into these views about their own (Jewish-Israeli) community and the other (Arab-Palestinian or non-Jewish) community, some students demonstrated their awareness about racism towards Arab-Palestinians:

> *S4: The Arabs think that Israel belongs to them and we think that it belongs to us by the bible.*
>
> *S3: They think that our land belongs to them and we think the opposite.*
>
> *S5: It's because we don't know each other! We hear things and rumours-*
>
> *S3: Not all the Arab[s] think that-*
>
> *S1: We talk about it so much that we can't like figure a way out of this like to share it.*
>
> *S5: We're stuck a bit.*
>
> *S2: And when one Arab does something bad to our people, we think that all of them are like that.*
>
> *S1: In the United States, they have a lot of racist people like the black and white thing, here it is Jewish and Arabic. (…) And people don't understand that there are like good people and bad people that are Jewish and good people and bad people that are Arabic. (Focus group 3, Jewish-Israeli school, Year 9)*

Whilst this definition of racism is reminiscent of individual prejudice resulting from a lack of knowledge about 'the other', at least these students acknowledge the existence of racism. In another excerpt, students referred to the need to meet the 'other' side and to get to know their perspective, which indicates their interest in learning more about Arab-Palestinians and the conflict.

*S3: [We would like to meet] People that are different-*

*S2: We want to know them!*

*S5: Yes, not to know them just because of what we hear, we need to meet them to see them, it will maybe cause a little bit peace.*

*S2: To see it from their side.*

*S4: Maybe we will understand their opinion, not just ours. (Focus group 3, Jewish-Israeli school, Year 9)*

To summarise, in the Jewish-Israeli school the focus is laid on teaching about anti-Semitism instead of teaching about racism in Israel's society. When teachers address racism, it is usually framed in terms of liberal or conservative multiculturalism and some teachers displayed 'orientalist' (racist) attitudes towards Arab-Palestinians. Unsurprisingly, students reproduce these views and one-sided narratives or racist attitudes do not seem to be challenged. Yet, some students also demonstrated awareness about structural racism and expressed a wish to learn about Arab-Palestinian perspectives and narratives. Whilst teachers sidestep teaching about structural racism in Israel, the data indicate that some students learn about these issues outside of school.

## ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL: BETWEEN ANTIRACISM AND ASSIMILATION

The data from teachers and students show that like the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, Arab-Palestinians in Israel are conversant about experiences of racism. Like in the Catholic school, these experiences make it easier for the teacher to recognise the issue of racism in Israel's society and also to address it in the classroom. Teachers in Israel are restricted in their criticism towards the Israeli state and in discussing the historical experience of oppression by Arab-Palestinians (this refers to the Nakba law and other educational policies mentioned in Chapter one. I will discuss this in more detail in Chapter five). The Arab-Palestinian teacher also explained that the curriculum does not address

racism in Israel. Yet, he stated that he discusses racism through the concepts of equality and discrimination during the citizenship lesson:

> *There is nothing about racism [in the curriculum], but you know you have the right of equality, and from it, we can talk about racism and the different ways of practice with one and another, you know discrimination. So, we talk about it and of course, we talk about Arabs and Jews. (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school)*

This is a different approach to multiculturalism than in the other schools as it politicises racism and frames it as a problem arising from discrimination and the lack of equality, referring to a system of advantage, privilege, and power (McLaren, 1995; Tatum, 2000; Wellman, 1993). Moreover, this approach resonates with the Arab-Palestinian students' experiences of racism. The previous section about the conflict showed that many Arab-Palestinians referred to narratives about discrimination and suffering that their families experienced. In contrast to Catholic students, they have their own personal experiences of structural racism and discrimination in a society, which denies them equal rights and citizenship (Adalah, 2017; Yiftachel, 1999).

> *S1: I think each one [pupil] said something about it, same situation when there was someone racist towards them.*
>
> *A: Ok so everybody has some experience with racism? You have all experience with it-*
>
> *S1: Yes. (Focus group 3, Arab-Palestinian school)*

The students' understanding of racism and discrimination is structural because they relate it to a system of privilege based on 'ethnicity' or religion that marks the differences between Jewish, non-Jewish or Arab-Palestinian citizens in Israel:

> *S2: There are many many examples [of how their rights are restricted]. We want and we expect from the country to treat everyone the same way! Not this because he is Jewish ok-*
>
> *S1: Unfortunately, it doesn't happen because the country is Jewish.*

*S2: You work, you go to study and then "Because you are Arab, we can't accept you to work here."*

*S1: I hear that the government supports Jewish schools with more money than our schools.*

*S2: (…) And [the president] gives more money to the school, which- they didn't teach anything only the Torah. And the schools need all the support to study Arabic, Hebrew, history- (…) We expect from the government, to be honest, to be with all the people. (Focus group 2, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Their framing of racism is paired with a critical approach to citizenship, which has been documented in previous research by Pinson (2008) who found that Arab-Palestinian students in Israel tend to resist citizenship due to the discrimination that they experience (Pinson, 2008). In the following excerpt, one student connected structural racism to citizenship in Israel, explaining how citizenship becomes diluted or meaningless to him as a result of discrimination:

*I don't feel like a normal citizen in Israel. It's a very racist country. Jewish people don't accept us, I feel like I'm the one who should accept them and I'm looking for their acceptance. So, about citizenship, I'm not connected to [it], I don't feel it. (…) The country doesn't treat me like a citizen. (…) It's unfair, it's like I have to deal with a lot of obstacles that most of the people in the country don't need to. (…) I can't apply to every job I want, I cannot learn [study] whatever I want, because I know I won't find a job in this. My [family's] lands are being taken. (…) [I]t's not important [citizenship]. It doesn't mean anything. (Student interview, Arab-Palestinian school)*

However, at the same time, other students and their teachers stressed the importance of citizenship as a 'channel' to claiming their citizenship rights and defined the important task of citizenship education as teaching them about these rights:

*S1: Yeah, it's [citizenship] important. It's important to learn and to know about our rights.*

*S2: To know how to deal with the situation. (…)*

*S1: If something happens we have to know what we have to do, what they have to give us. To know if I'm oppressed or not. Then I know how I can deal with the problem. (Focus Group 4, Arab-Palestinian school)*

*To know their rights [is the most important goal of citizenship education]. Especially here as Arabs, to know our rights. So they don't have to say that- we don't have rights. We have rights and we have to fight to get them, to get our rights in the legal way, not in the illegal way. They told us in the book that all of the people are equal, so you have to, you have it here. So you have to learn to know the rights, to get it. (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Previous research by Agbaria (2016a) established that by teaching about rights, Arab-Palestinian teachers have found a way to address the discrimination of Arab-Palestinian citizens and seek to empower their students, even if this is not the goal of the official curriculum. According to Agbaria, on the one hand, teachers are aware of the challenging conditions and discrimination that affect minorities in Israel and on the other hand they see the opportunities that are granted through socio-economic mobility and the legal system that protects against the discrimination through granting individual rights.

The students were aware of how Arab-Palestinians in Israel are constructed as a security threat in political and public discourses. For example, in the excerpts below they referred to their experience of being subject to increased security checks during the last war in Gaza:

*S1: [A]lthough we are far from Gaza and we don't feel the war, but when you go to the mall and stuff like this the security checks us very carefully. They check us all the time but when there is a war or something like that they do it more. (Focus group 4, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Moreover, the following excerpt shows their attentiveness to how they are deliberately portrayed by the media reproducing stereotypes in line with the dominant representations

of Arab-Palestinians in political discourses or educational textbooks (Bar-Tal and Teichmann, 2005):

> *S3: And if you look at the media and at you know the news, whenever they want to do an interview with Jews and Arabs, they tend to go for an Arab who is not very confident, who doesn't express himself right (…)*
>
> *S2: [He] is like an underdog, they bring a qualified Jew for the job, he knows what he is talking about and this is his language [Hebrew], he is prepared, and then they bring an Arab who is not very qualified for this argument. (Focus group 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

However, the data also indicate that some students essentialise Arab-Palestinian nationalism. This stems perhaps from the circumstance that students mainly draw on narratives from their homes and community to understand the conflict and racism. Chapter 1 outlined that a strategy of Palestinian nationalists was the denial of Jewish-Israelis common nationality (see page 42, Bechor, 1995 quoted in Ghanem, 2013). In the excerpt below, two students seemed to reproduce this strategy:

> *S1: He is Muslim and we are Christian but our nationality is Arab. But Jews- like they are Jewish (…)*
>
> *S2: No but some of them are Polish, some of them are German, some are Lebanese-*
>
> *S1: They don't have a certain like- [nationality]*
>
> *S3: We are all divided, the only thing that is common to all citizens is human beings. As human beings, we should be getting the same rights, it's human beings' rights- it's basic! And it's not given equally. (Focus group 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Student 1 and 2's claimed that 'Arab nationality' is more valid or real than 'Israeli nationality', overlooking the socially constructed character of nationality as a political claim to superiority and ownership of territory, which suggests a form of strategic essentialism (Spivak, 1988). Yet, Student 3 countered this claim to some extent, referring

to common humanity as a 'better' basis for rights. He promoted a 'strategic universalism' (Gilroy, 2000) that stresses humanity as a collective identity and basis for rights.

During the focus groups, Arab-Palestinian students also de-constructed the particularity of the Holocaust that is emphasised through the teaching about anti-Semitism. In the following excerpt, the students challenged the dominant narrative about the Holocaust's uniqueness (importantly, while not denying it or its significance):

> *S3: We're not saying that the Jews haven't suffered, but they also have done the second part of their jobs! They have been through a lot but they can't just ignore the fact that they have made people suffer under them! It's like "we are the poor guys – feel sorry for us! Come to our country to help us to build ourselves".*
>
> *S2: That's also because six million Jews died in the Holocaust, but it doesn't give them the right to kill another two Palestinians. They took lands from other people.*
>
> *S1: And they felt how bad it is, so why are they doing it to others? (Focus group 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

They adopted a more structural approach to racism and sectarianism as a system that seeks to establish superiority and inferiority. In contrast to the other groups, they seemed more aware of how racism/sectarianism operates across contexts beyond their personal experiences of racism. For example, they understood the 'rifts' in Israel's society as a result of institutional racism and lack of equality, adopting a more critical perspective than their counterparts from the other schools:

> *S2: Even inside the Jewish community there is no equality, the white people in the Jewish community get more rights than the black, the Eastern and the Western.*
>
> *S3: And if there were no Arabs in this country, the Jewish people would just fight each other. (Focus group 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Being exposed to the Zionist narrative, Jewish-Israeli culture, language, and media in addition to their own narratives and experiences allows Arab-Palestinians to develop a broader, structural understanding of the conflict and racism.

However, besides this counter-discourse against the dominant Zionist narrative, the teacher and some of the students also reproduced discourses of assimilation. In the excerpt below, one student referred to this tendency of resorting to assimilation that leads Arab-Palestinians to accept their situation:

> *A lot of the Arabs decided to accept the situation "ok, we have to live with it, we can't do anything about it". They will continue in their way and some of them will say to you "we have it better than people in Egypt, we live better than people in Libya and in Syria" But if we live better, it doesn't mean that we live good. They are like thankful that we are not in Syria. You will hear about this side a lot if you talk to Arabs. (…) So, in the region I'm from, I see the racism in other places. In [the city where the school is located] it's less because people started to get used to each other. There is racism, but less. But you don't have to go very far to find the racism. (Student interview, Arab-Palestinian school)*

He claimed that by comparing their situation with people in other conflict-affected countries they overlook the issue of racism that exists in Israel. The following excerpt reinforces his point. It presents a discussion between three students who represented those two opposing perspectives when they talk about the quality of life (referring mainly to rights, security, and health) for Arab-Palestinian citizens in Israel:

> *S3: There are people who think that it's not enough what they give us, but I think that it's enough – for me. I study here, I have family-*
>
> *S1: Shall I tell you why you feel so good- because you compare yourself to the Arab countries where there is no study, no family-we should compare ourselves to a better place, not to a bad place. (…) You think our life here is perfect because you see on the TV on the news-*
>
> *S2: That there is people who have a worse life than us.*
>
> *S3: Yeah compared to them we have a good life.*
>
> *S1: So, I think if we want a better place, we should compare ourselves to a better place. Not to the worst place, so we feel it's ok, I'm happy, I study- yeah it's right*

*you have a family, you can study- but there [are] things you can't do, you can't say in the street whatever you want. (Focus group 3, Arab-Palestinian school)*

These students disagreed on whether they have sufficient rights in the Jewish democratic state, or whether they should demand rights and privileges that they are entitled to, based on citizenship in a democratic state, which Israel claims to be. This discussion refers to an assimilation strategy that demands from Arab-Palestinian citizens to be grateful to the Israeli state, which claims that it protects them and grants more rights than other neighbouring (Arab) countries (for this discourse see Heller, 2017). Jewish-Israeli students also reproduced this assimilation strategy (cited earlier on page 189-92), which is part of a larger discourse that I refer to throughout the thesis that seeks to integrate Arab-Palestinian citizens into parts of Israeli society and institutions, such as the military.

Torn between assimilation and reclamation of their national identity, Arab-Palestinians, in general, seemed to be more aware of structural reasons for the conflict, compared to all other groups. Consequently, they described the conflict and racism as a political instead of an interpersonal issue, demonstrating a critical approach towards multiculturalism and a complex understanding of racism as a system of privilege:

*S1: We have like as simple citizens we can get along with each other, we can work it out, but the government is not helping so much. (Focus group 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

*S2: Here we live in peace and we are friends, but at the heart, you feel that you are not important, you don't feel accepted. (…)*

*S1: They don't give you all your rights. (Focus group 2, Arab-Palestinian school)*

*We have here you know meetings between Arabs and Jews from the different schools, but it's still on the person[al] [level], not on the political. So, we have the Jews, our Israeli friends and they are our neighbours, but you see in the whole side of policy, there is racism. But if I talk with my friend [Jewish friend] it's different. On the personal level. But there [are] more problems between Arabs and Jews on the whole politics you can see it. (…) you see the difference between the*

*[Arab and Jewish neighbourhood]? (…) Yeah, you see it. And here [in this city] it's mixed-up. So, when you go to [a village] it's different. You see the difference between an Arab village and- and yeah we don't know why- we know why but you can't tell them, you are a democracy, so what is a democracy? (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school)*

These statements by the teacher and his students define the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as political, referring to structural issues such as racism and the lack of rights. This is reminiscent of the critique raised by academics that the roots of the conflict do not lay in the lack of interpersonal encounters with the 'other' side, but in wider political, social and economic structures. The Arab-Palestinian students' broader knowledge derives from the fact of being exposed to different narratives of the conflict through the education system and the personal experiences of discrimination by their family and community.

## CONCLUSION

This Chapter discussed how cultural hegemony in citizenship education in Northern Ireland and Israel is expressed through avoidance. It introduced three major avoidance strategies that dilute the critical (political) potential of citizenship education: the absence of critical political thinking, the decontextualization of the conflict and the avoidance of structural approaches to racism and sectarianism. Arguably, these avoidance strategies are all intertwined and reinforce each other. Structural approaches to conflict, racism, and sectarianism depend on critical pedagogy that questions and challenges the status quo and vice versa.

Whilst the citizenship curriculum officially offers a space for teachers to address issues related to the recent conflict and it advocates the use of critical teaching methods, the level of flexibility in the policy text leaves it up to the teachers and schools whether and how to teach about the past. In one sense this seems to respect the professional autonomy and expertise of the teachers, yet, it offers legitimacy to avoidance.

Despite the dominance of avoidance, most teachers and some students have complex structural understandings of the conflict, sectarianism, and racism. Especially among

Arab-Palestinian and Catholic students and teachers, it became evident that personal experiences and community narratives of structural sectarianism or racism enhance teachers and students' critical understanding of these concepts. Arab-Palestinian and Catholic students tend to be more politicised and have more knowledge about the recent conflict, through narratives from their families (see Chapter four). However, they gain and negotiate this knowledge mainly outside the classroom.

Across all schools, there is also a tendency to focus on narratives and perspectives that portray the own community as the victim of the conflict and only the Arab-Palestinian school appears to be an exception to this. Between Protestant and Jewish-Israeli students, the extension of democracy and citizenship rights to other groups and diversity are constructed as a threat to their identity (see for a general argument Giroux, 1997). Some Protestant students described democracy as limiting the rights of their community (for example the flag protest mentioned on pages 153-45). Similarly, some Jewish-Israeli students justified that Israel is a Jewish state and that citizenship rights towards non-Jewish citizens are limited. Both groups construct diversity as a threat to their own cultural integrity and (national) identity (Giroux, 1997). In contrast, Arab-Palestinian and Catholic students appear to have a better understanding of concepts such as human rights, democracy, and equality, which they connect to their communities' narratives of the conflict and they link their collective rights to these concepts.

When identity-related issues are addressed, principals and teachers usually adopt a conservative or liberal approach to multiculturalism that intentionally avoids dealing with sectarianism and racism in a critical manner (see Tatum, 2000; Wellman, 1993). Since these perspectives are the most 'comfortable' and less contested in the classroom, teachers, and students appear to sidestep challenging racist/sectarian or one-sided perspectives, which dilutes the critical political potential of citizenship education. Therefore, citizenship education becomes complicit in essentialising culture and identity as well as reproducing stereotypes and racist/sectarian attitudes.

This raises the question why schools, teachers, and students tend to circumvent having these discussions in citizenship education. Whilst educational policies do not encourage

the critical and transformative potential of the subject, the next Chapter will argue that avoidance is reinforced and facilitated by censors that allow this 'self-censorship' by schools, teachers, and students.

# CHAPTER 5: CENSORS OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

## INTRODUCTION

This Chapter introduces the argument that schools, teachers, and students draw on avoidance strategies in citizenship education, presented in the last Chapter because they are censored in formal and informal ways. These censors are so powerful that they impede teachers' and students' capacity to harness the critical potential of citizenship, despite their intentions and abilities to do so.

There are similarities and differences regarding these censors in Northern Ireland and Israel. In both jurisdictions, the overarching censor is the managerialist culture. Managerialism is an ideology that serves to sustain cultural hegemony and cultural reproduction in the education system. This is manifest through curricula and educational policies that impose a managerialist approach on schools, directed by the demands of parents and societal elites. In Northern Ireland and Israel, the education system is structured and directed by a culture of performativity that increasingly assesses schools, teachers, and students in terms of measurable outcomes (Ball, 2003). The discussion of the data demonstrates how cultures of performativity and managerialism subject teachers to maximise performance and limit their space to develop students' critical political thinking and to address the conflict, racism, and sectarianism.

While the national identity of the state in Northern Ireland remains contested and there is no agreement on common national citizenship (Smith, 2003), this issue is not contested on the political level in Israel, at least not among political elites and the majority population. The Jewish character is manifested through the declaration of independence, through laws and policies, including citizenship education. Due to its officially uncontested character, ethnic-religious nationalism in Israel serves as a powerful censor

of discussions about the state's character. I will outline how this process of censoring is reinforced through educational policies and the preparation for the military service, which is interpreted by Jewish-Israeli participants as an integral part of citizenship education.

By contrast in Northern Ireland, censoring is not mainly promoted on an official political level, but through communities. It was mentioned in Chapter two that paramilitaries remain active in some working-class communities across Northern Ireland (Jarman, 2004; Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008). This Chapter will argue that this environment influences what is considered safe to talk about in the classroom. For example, the data suggest that schools and teachers fear consequences for criticising the paramilitaries and their actions and thus this criticism is censored.

Criticism towards the state and its actions during the conflict is also censored in Israel. Whilst the data is less conclusive than in Northern Ireland regarding the fact that communities censor criticism, schools, and teachers are censored mainly by educational policies in Israel. Consequently, in both Northern Ireland and Israel, schools, teachers, and students fear repercussions when discussing controversial issues related to the conflict. This Chapter discusses how the managerialist culture and identity politics act as censors in the citizenship lesson.

## MANAGERIALIST CULTURE

Critical educationalists (for example Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1997) have outlined how education is permeated by neoliberal politics that foreground individualism and performance. Giroux and Apple maintain that instead of promoting empowerment and social change, neoliberal approaches to citizenship education turn the subject into a form of domination, producing future citizens who best serve the economic and political elites.

Public institutions and organisations are increasingly invaded by a managerialist culture (Kilkauer, 2015; Simkins, 1998). Kilkauer defined managerialism as a combination of tools and ideology that seeks to establish itself systematically across organisations and institutions in society, running these as corporations. Its purpose is to justify managerial

techniques across all areas of work and society, underpinned by the belief that consumer capitalism is a superior ideology. Simkins (1998) claimed that schools in the United Kingdom were increasingly affected by managerialism in the form of non-financial control mechanisms that constrain schools' choices of how they allocate their resources. As examples, he referred to the regime of regular inspections, published tests and examination results that measure the performance of schools.

Drawing on Gramsci (1971/1929) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1990), managerialism is an ideal ideology to sustain cultural hegemony through cultural reproduction in education. It contributes to the protection of the status quo and privilege of dominant elites by establishing itself as the 'common-sense'. This is reinforced by the determination of managerialism to present itself as 'neutral' (Kilkauer, 2015).

This section contends that the managerialist culture, which permeates the education systems in Northern Ireland and Israel, acts as a censor of the critical potential of citizenship education. It is distributed through different channels: firstly, through the curriculum by defining young people's role as citizens as consumers and contributors to the economy; secondly, by recasting citizenship as a low-profile subject compared to other subjects deemed more expedient to the managerialist culture and finally, through an emphasis on performance that directs teacher training towards increasing students' performativity. Additionally, since the 'quality' of education is measured according to students' performance in examinations, this pressures teachers to focus on the knowledge that will be tested in the examination (Apple, 2004). Therefore, the managerialist culture also influences the selection of knowledge that is taught.

## YOUNG PEOPLE AS CONSUMERS AND CONTRIBUTORS TO THE ECONOMY

Mitchell (2003) argued that processes of globalisation and neoliberalism led to a shift in multicultural education to be more 'person-centred', raising skills-based individuals that are able to succeed in an environment of global competitiveness. These trends are reflected in citizenship education in Northern Ireland and Israel, which shape young people's

identities as consumers and contributors to the economy. The revised curriculum in Northern Ireland employs a language of managerialism by setting one of its goals to educate young people as contributors to the economy or through the strands of 'personal development' and 'employability' that define the citizen primarily as an individual (see CCEA, 2017). One example that shows how the managerialist approach is manifest in the classroom is the inclusion of 'active learning strategies'. A guidebook for teachers provides a detailed description of these strategies, stating that the intention is to empower students and to develop their critical thinking among other goals (CCEA, 2000a). Yet, a closer analysis of the language reveals the functional and instrumental values that seem to underpin the curricular offering. For example, the idea of 'employability', expressed through terms such as "potential", "optimize" or "effective thinking" (CCEA, 2000a: 1) capture the extent to which the curriculum is framed as a 'tool' by which students enhance their 'marketability' in a competitive labour market. Hence it might be argued that active learning is promoted only so far as it will 'empower' young people to serve the economy.

During the focus groups, young people reproduced this individualistic understanding of citizenship. In their drawings, they described citizens as elitist, sophisticated, having a university degree and articulate (see Figure 12), reflecting the 'employability' aspect of the curriculum (see Figure 13):

> *Citizens earn money from jobs. If you work harder the more money you get and you will be happy and the hard work pays off (Focus group 4, Catholic school)*

> *Citizens help out with work in the community which can help the economy grow (Focus group 4, Catholic school)*

Individualistic forms of citizenship are also featured in the focus group discussions and mind maps from the Protestant school, where some students constructed citizenship as elitist or as only relevant for people who pursue higher education (citizens as wearing suits, see Figure 5):

> *S1: I always imagine a citizen as someone who is really sophisticated like with a suit, something like that. (Focus group 3, Protestant school)*

*A: Do you think citizenship is something that really matters to young people?*

*S1: Not really, no.*

*S2: Not really, because they are not really thinking about that.*

*S1: Well it depends if they want to know about the stuff like if you want to go to university. (Focus group 3, Protestant school)*

These descriptions of citizens across both schools refer to how students reproduce the concepts of citizenship that are mediated to them through the education system in Northern Ireland.

In Israel, the curriculum foregrounds a nationalistic-republican notion of citizenship (this concept of citizenship is outlined in Chapter Two). However, it is argued that since the 1980s, educational policies in Israel are increasingly directed towards privatisation, performance, standardisation, and testing (Dahan and Yonah, 2006 cited in Agbaria, 2016b), suggesting a reinforcement of individualism. The new focus on the 'self' and individual success appear to go hand in hand with a lack of interest in politics and in the conflict as the Jewish-Israeli principal described in the following excerpt. She excused this focus on the 'self' as a result of growing up in a conflict-affected society:

*[M]aybe a lot of pupils don't listen to the news, are not so interested in you know- Trump, Clinton. And I think Israel (…) every day you turn on the radio, the news and you hear about bomb here and bomb there and so people just want to go to the school, to work, music and you know Buddha, yoga- and not to be involved, most of the people. (Principal, Jewish-Israeli school)*

This trend is reinforced by descriptions of young people's identities that include aspects of leisure, materialism, and lifestyle (see Figure 25). However, instead of viewing the lack of interest in politics as a feature of conflict-affected societies, perhaps it reflects a more general trend of individualism that is promoted by neoliberal policies (see Dahan and Yonah, 2006 cited in Agbaria, 2016b). This is reinforced by the fact that despite the strong interest in the conflict and politics that I observed among Arab-Palestinian students, the culture of performance exerts a strong influence on their school and pressures students

generally to focus on their individual educational success, which will be discussed in the following sections.

## CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AS A 'LOW-PROFILE' SUBJECT

It is argued that as part of neoliberal trends, public policies associate economic growth with developments in science and technology (Olssen and Peters, 2005). Therefore, it is not overly surprising that citizenship is not seen as a subject that contributes to economic growth among conservative and liberal educators and administrators who demand to focus on science and technology-oriented subjects (Mitchell, 2003). The excerpts below show how students reproduce these neoliberal trends, viewing citizenship not as a useful subject for their personal career and employability. Generally, they described STEM subjects or English as more conducive for their future professional development:

> *A: Do you think other subjects are more important than citizenship?*
>
> *S2: I think just the usual Maths, English maybe Science. (…) I think it [citizenship] is still an important thing to learn, but you have to think about getting a good GCSE or something, to get a job. It's just nice to have you know, but the main things are Math, English, and Science maybe. (Focus group 2, Catholic school)*
>
> *A: Would you say that citizenship is an important subject?*
>
> *S2: Maybe whenever you get older.*
>
> *S1: Yeah when you are doing GCSEs or something. (Focus group 3, Protestant school)*

Students defined work and 'having a job' as important aspects of citizenship and describe citizens as "hardworking" (see Figure 6). They diminished citizenship as a subject that is "nice to have" (P2, focus group 2) and that prepares young people mainly as contributors to the economy, instead of empowering them as critical and transforming citizens (for example see Banks, 2008).

These perceptions of citizenship education result from a policy that prioritises subjects like STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). One policymaker argued that this is expressed through the amount of funding that citizenship education receives, compared to these subjects:

> *[I]t doesn't have a high enough profile in schools, I don't think it has a high enough profile politically (…) they do it for other subjects you know like STEM science, technology and what I see in here is a cycle, where things become popular like, STEM because of the economic implications so any of these subjects are fine. Citizenship then at that time because we were coming out of "the Troubles" and you know we were all talking about a post-conflict society- but they became complacent and now well they just think "oh probably then we are alright". (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland)*

The vice-principal of the Protestant school, who argued that citizenship is taken less seriously in grammar schools in Northern Ireland, also lamented the fact that citizenship education is not viewed as important. He claimed that in grammar schools citizenship is not considered as relevant or prestigious as STEM subjects or languages. While there is currently no documented research from Northern Ireland that supports his claim, the data generally suggest that schools reproduce educational policies that foreground subjects and knowledge, deemed to serve the economy well and prepare the individual student to compete in the job market. Hence this turns citizenship into a subject that is redolent of the neoliberal agenda (Gilborn, 2006).

A consequence of this lack of funding that is allocated to citizenship education is that there is an absence of teacher training and support in particular for teaching about the critical aspects of the subject, such as controversial issues, the conflict, and racism. Between 2005 and 2011 when citizenship education was introduced in Northern Ireland, it received generous funding (it was anticipated that £1.4 million was required for teacher training, see Arlow, 2004). Yet, at the time of writing the education authority does not offer training for citizenship education about how to harness students' critical capacities and how to address the recent conflict.

Related to the lack of adequate preparation and training for citizenship teachers, another issue that has been raised mainly by policymakers in both contexts is the professional and academic background of citizenship teachers. One policymaker from Northern Ireland suggested that teachers who decided to teach citizenship as an additional subject often have a background in a subject other than politics, sociology or social science:

> *I'm guessing citizenship teachers are not pure citizenship teachers, they are the science teachers who want to do something out of the area or so you know. So, I think the school system needs more support for the teachers full-stop in the subjects that they are dealing with. (Policymaker 4, Northern Ireland)*

This issue was addressed by one of the Catholic teachers. In her school, the coordinator for the subject tries to encourage school leaders to allow only those teachers who have completed the specific training to teach:

> *You know in our school we fought very much that the people who were trained in citizenship taught and for most of the time that has been the case. But there have been a few anomalies where people have been given it on their timetable and have paid lip-service to it, they are literally "Give me the booklet and I'll do the booklet work" you know, where [name of another teacher] and I would be active methodologies (...) we would deal probably more with contentious issues then people who are just given it on their timetable you know. (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

According to her, teachers who did not participate in the initial teacher training would focus on memorisation and summarising as methods and tend to avoid contentious issues. This might not be overly surprising, considering the fact that these teachers do not receive sufficient training in understanding and delivering complex concepts that are part of citizenship education. Policymakers in Israel also lamented the fact that citizenship teachers often come from other subject areas:

> *[S]ome of the teachers didn't go through the teacher training of becoming a civics teacher. Some of them are history teachers, or literature teachers and so on. (...)*

> *They didn't study in university political science or in law school or something like that. (…) [T]hey don't know the content so well, the knowledge is not so deep. (Policymaker 4, Israel)*
>
> *Out of 100 percent, 70 percent of teachers are not from social science, not from political science, and not from sociology, they come from history, geography and stuff like that. Not from the main core of the profession, ok. So, they needed to have a very quick (…) training programs through the Ministry. (Policymaker 2, Israel)*

A previous study conducted with citizenship teachers in Israel suggested that teachers who come from disciplines other than political science and sociology tend to emphasise less the development of critical (political) thinking, as their knowledge about complex concepts such as democracy and citizenship might be more superficial (Muff and Bekerman, 2017). Educational policies and schools do not require or encourage teachers to develop a deeper understanding and knowledge of these contested and complex concepts in citizenship education. The fact that it is not seen as a priority that citizenship teachers have completed specialist training and education to be able to teach these complex concepts and skills, suggests that teaching about controversial issues and encouraging critical political thinking is not a priority on the educational agenda of the political establishments in Israel and Northern Ireland.

Teachers and policymakers refer to this issue, complaining about the lack of training in these areas of citizenship education. For example, the vice-principal in the Protestant school emphasised the difficulty of challenging the views that the young people grow up within their communities and the need for teacher training to deal with these controversies:

> *[I]n Northern Ireland … not so much now as maybe in the past but you're challenging some of the cultures that the children have been brought into, were born into and you're challenging the cultures of the families that they live in and that they go home to, you know. So, that's a really complex thing and yet there isn't the training for it. (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

Reilly and Niens (2005) argued that the lack of adequate training to deal with controversial issues in the classrooms in Northern Ireland results in a lack of confidence to have these discussions with their students. Similarly, McEvoy (2007) maintained that teachers are not provided with a helpful framework for addressing issues related to the conflict and its legacy at the individual and the structural level. While CCEA published a booklet on teaching controversial issues at key stage three in 2015, widespread teacher training in this area has not been provided at the time of writing, although one policymaker remarked that future training was planned by CCEA.

In Israel, the content of teacher training needs to be approved by the educational authorities, which leads to the situation that teachers only receive official training that is in line with the dominant political agenda, as one Arab-Palestinian policymaker explained. He argued that training that prepares and educates teachers about multiculturalism, including different narratives about the conflict and Arab-Palestinian culture is unlikely to be approved by the current educational authorities. According to another policymaker from Israel, most of the teacher training (95 percent according to him) does not address (sensitive) issues of identity and the conflict in Israel. Some policymakers stated that initial teacher training in this area is more balanced, academically rigorous and includes teaching about democracy and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, whereas the in-service training follows a more nationalistic approach. Therefore, one policymaker concluded that there is not enough training for in-service teachers in areas such as human rights, democracy or co-existence, because the Ministry of Education does not always approve these programmes and there is no legal requirement for training to teach these concepts:

> *[T]here is no law that every teacher is supposed to learn about human rights or democracy about all the co-existence or other values. Also, we [an organisation that offers this kind of teacher training] don't [teach] in this training what we want. Because (...) the ministry has to agree to our training (...) if you want to [offer] a training by the education ministry, sometimes we compromise about some ideas. (Policymaker 5, Israel)*

In both jurisdictions, there is a lack of funding for those aspects of citizenship education that sustain its critical potential like teaching about controversial issues, the conflict, human rights education and antiracism. This influences how schools integrate this subject into their curriculum. The data across schools demonstrated that school leaderships do not view citizenship education as an important subject and also do not believe that it contributes to conflict transformation. For example, one teacher from the Catholic school lamented that the school leadership ridicules the subject's importance:

> *R4: I think in our school a lot of people see it as a wee- it's useless.*
>
> *A: Ok, so it's not considered an important subject?*
>
> *R4: I don't think so, not in our school no. Definitely not like there would have been a running joke in our school. Our principal used to say to me that there was a wee boy and he used to call it "citizen-shit" instead of citizenship and she thought this was funny. (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

Similarly, the vice-principal from the Protestant school argued that in some schools (not in his own) citizenship becomes a "mickey mouse subject". He suggested that in contrast to other subjects it is not considered as relevant for parents' and students' career aspirations in the competitive job market.

Principals and teachers generally diminished the subject's empowering and transformative potential. The Arab-Palestinian principal defined citizenship education as being a good pupil, knowing the rules, following the correct rules and being "a good person" in general (Principal, Arab-Palestinian school), reflecting a quite shallow and conservative concept of citizenship with an emphasis on obedience.

Mirroring this view of citizenship education, the teacher from this school elaborated on the role of citizenship as contributing to students' future professional career. He emphasised the importance of education as a means of social advancement for the Arab-Palestinian community in Israel.

> *You know just to teach the pupils, to go to study, get high jobs, and then university and after all that you can have your rights, not only your rights but you can live*

> *like a human being, equality! Because there is nobody who will stop you and [take] your job, so we have professors and doctors, because they have studied! If you want to say "The government do[es]n't let us study so we will stay workers" – No you have to study and you can! (…) Our str[ength] is education. We are strong in education. (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school)*

While he argued that a better socio-economic position will enhance Arab-Palestinian citizens' individual opportunities, he defined citizenship as an instrumental subject for individual success and suggested that it is possible to achieve equality through a good qualification in education. Agbaria (2016b) and Pinson and Agbaria (2015) suggest that this is a general culture promoted in Arab-Palestinian schools in Israel, where there is a stronger focus on individual success and socio-economic mobility that function as mechanisms of control. Other research demonstrated that Arab-Palestinian students (and arguably their parents as well) have strong aspirations and expectations towards higher education, compared to other minorities in Israel (Khattab, 2002; 2003; Yair, Khattab, and Benavot, 2003). Despite these aspirations, Arab-Palestinian students are disadvantaged in pursuing higher education and in the labour market under the discriminatory socio-economic conditions in Israel (Pinson and Agbaria, 2015). Agbaria (2016b) argued that while the illusion that every student can succeed in the system by investing in potential success in education is promoted among all students, it affects Arab-Palestinian students in particular. In contrast to Jewish-Israeli students who are advantaged by the public sphere that is dominated by their collective identity, interests, and ideals what is left for Arab-Palestinians is a focus on individualism and professionalism in education (Agbaria, 2016b; Pinson and Agbaria, 2015).

This contributes to the de-politicization of citizenship education, which is not viewed as a subject that can support conflict transformation in Israel and Northern Ireland. The Arab-Palestinian teacher explained that it could increase students' knowledge about the conflict, but not contribute to transformation.

> *No, [citizenship education can contribute] just only to know, not to fix the situation. (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school)*

A teacher from the Protestant school also diminished the potential of citizenship to contribute to conflict transformation. She argued that it might be "a good thing" (Teacher 2, Protestant school) that students do not know a lot about the conflict (as a result of not teaching it in citizenship class), since they are living during a time of relative peace and they have other opportunities nowadays than getting involved in politics. It is an odd statement for a politics teacher, not wanting her students to get involved in politics, but it exemplifies how some teachers avoid discussing politics in the citizenship lesson, as argued earlier in Chapter four.

Similarly, the Jewish-Israeli principal also stated in the excerpt below that citizenship education in her school does not contribute to conflict transformation. Additionally, she suggested that the major goal of the citizenship lesson is to prepare her students for the final examination:

> *Not civic education like that in school [can contribute to conflict transformation], because the teacher just prepares for the bagrut (…) (Principal, Jewish-Israeli school)*

This is important because it demonstrates how the education system, in general, is permeated by a culture of performance that limits the subjects' critical potential. This impression was reinforced during the observation of the citizenship lesson. The lesson focused on memorising and summarising the workings of the Israeli parliament, which is a topic that is covered by the final examination. In the following section, I will discuss the data that refers to this culture of performance. Together with this neglect of citizenship education's critical potential through educational policies, the focus on performance further dilutes its critical content and discourages and restrains teachers from addressing it in the classroom.

## THE FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE AND TEACHERS AS PERFORMATIVE WORKERS

This section discusses how the delivery of citizenship education is limited by the preparation for the final examination, as the Jewish-Israeli principal already indicated

above. Educational policies are increasingly infiltrated by a culture of performativity, which controls the education system through its measures of productivity or output quality (Ball, 2003). Ball maintained that under performativity, teachers and schools in general are assessed according to measurable outcomes that demonstrate 'effectiveness' and 'excellence'. The data presented in this section shows how educational practices are dominated by the focus on the preparation for the final examination as a tool for measurement of performativity. As a result, schools, teachers, and students are pressured to focus on pedagogical 'technologies' that maximise students' performance in the examination. This affects the content of the teacher training, the time allocated to citizenship education by the school leadership and the time that the teacher can spend on cultivating students' critical political thinking, discussing the conflict, racism, and sectarianism.

The Protestant vice-principal concluded that there is an absence of training because the training offered to citizenship teachers focuses on the preparation for the final examination:

> *[T]here is a complete absence of training, complete absence, there isn't the money. So, the only training you have now for citizenship will be for the GCSE and it's how to mark the work, how to moderate the coursework, they call it like a coursework clinic, so whatever you know. (…) It's technical about the rubric of the course as opposed to what is the best method of teaching (…) about diversity and segregation. (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

The situation in Israel is similar, as a policymaker from the Ministry of Education described in the excerpt below. She expressed optimism about the training and claimed that when she delivers teacher training she seeks to address issues such as the conflict and identity with her students. Hence, she blamed the teachers for wanting to discuss the preparation for the examination:

> *I bring a lot of expertise of different identity groups and we talk about the conflict … the main thing that I did and it made a lot of noise that instead of talking about what will be in the exam, we talked about how we can be better in class, what we*

> *need to talk about, the hard issues and how you make the difference or how you can meet the children. But you know it's hard for me to say what I planned and what really happen[s] because the teachers still they want to know what is in the exam. (Policymaker 6, Israel)*

Teachers' reluctance to address the conflict and other controversial issues in class or their lack of interest in teacher training about these issues are not surprising when educational policies are underpinned by avoidance, a managerialist culture, and a focus on performance. This requires teachers to focus on the topics relevant to the final examination. Another policymaker from Israel referred to this issue in the next excerpt. He explained that teachers are not obliged by policies to teach about controversial issues, whereas they are required to prepare their students for the final examination.

> *The bagrut is something that most teachers feel they are obliged to, they need to prepare the students for the bagrut. (…) the[re is a] tension between teaching for the bagrut, the final exam, and between educating and dealing with controversial issues that are not really in the curriculum or that you are not obliged to deal with it if you want to prepare your students, but it's very important and from [an] education[al] point of view, if you don't do it, it's a pity. So many teachers have this dilemma, how [much] energy to put inside. (Policymaker 4, Israel)*

Consequently, teachers need to be granted latitude to address controversial issues and to develop critical political thinking among their students. However, in the following excerpts teachers complained about how they are constrained by the focus on performance in the final examination.

Teachers from the Catholic school described how interactive approaches and progressive pedagogy (active learning strategies, described on pages 176-77; 181-182) are subjugated in favour of examination performance.

When teachers prepare children for the examination, they are more clearly motivated by memorisation, learning of specific concepts, and definitions.

> *The first three years are great you have all these interesting activities (…) and all of a sudden it becomes "you have to read this, you have to learn how the government works, you have to understand our laws maybe, you have to understand human rights" but there is actually no, there is no participation in that anymore at that stage. (…) it seems such a pity to have spent three years developing those skills with the children to all of a sudden saying "right you have to get a qualification in this so now we stop doing all of these things and now you have to write about it" – it doesn't follow through! You know the whole structure- and it's almost like it's going backwards (…) with citizenship you are building up these skills and this empowerment and this knowledge and then all of a sudden, all the participation stops. (Teacher 2, Catholic school)*

> *[Y]ou have to prepare them for the exam you don't have time to do all the wee activities, you know. (…) I think it needs maybe to have more time on the timetable. (Teacher 1, Catholic school)*

These excerpts demonstrate how assessment processes undermine the teaching of content and the pedagogical value of citizenship education. This is also indicated by one Protestant teacher, who criticised that topics that require an in-depth examination are only addressed superficially:

> *I actually think it's far too much they try to cover, you know, it's quite an in-depth subject. And I think, I feel personally they are trying to gloss over things. You know, you are doing this and then next week you say, "Right we're moving on to this" and then we are going back to this (…) You don't have time to really focus on anything, in my opinion, if you want to develop that kind of critical thinking. And there are aspects of it that are difficult for pupils to understand you know, unless they read a lot, watch the news, talk to people. (Teacher 1, Protestant school)*

Similarly, citizenship education in Israel promotes skills development such as discussions of current events, analysis, and critical thinking. Yet, these pedagogical methods become less relevant closer to the preparation for the final examination, shifting the focus onto the memorisation of concepts:

> *I think that the test is too hard. Because they want them to memorise a lot of definitions and I think it is not necessary. I think it is more important that they understand the concept and not this word or that word and it's a lot [to learn]. (Teacher 3, Jewish-Israeli school)*

> *The curriculum is also- it is trying to avoid the controversies. (…). So, it becomes informative and no controversy (Teacher 2, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Through assessment citizenship education becomes an almost mechanical subject that promotes a form of 'technical' citizenship through the memorisation of details of the democratic system, values, and features of the state and society as McLaughlin (1992) and Torney-Purta et al. (1999) have warned. In fact, in both Israel and Northern Ireland a review of the past final examinations from 2017 has shown that they were dominated by questions that required the memorisation of concepts, policies, laws, and definitions (Ministry of Education, 2017b; CCEA, 2017).

Perhaps it is also significant that the final examination for LGC in Northern Ireland assessed the understanding of the conflict either through expressions of cultural identity or through conflict resolution on a global level, mirroring the avoidance strategies outlined in Chapter four (CCEA, 2017). In the final examination in Israel, students were confronted with a newspaper article that argued for the need of a common identity and portrayed pluralism as a threat to unity (Ministry of Education, 2017b), reminiscent of what Giroux (1997) framed as conservative multiculturalism that portrays diversity as a "threat to democracy" (p.245). Additionally, students were expected to provide definitions of ethnocultural nationalism and a social-democratic approach towards pluralism that promotes equality as equal opportunities in the form of liberal multiculturalism, but arguably under the umbrella of the Zionist narrative (Ministry of Education, 2017b; see also textbook for definition: Ministry of Education, 2017a). Consequently, in both

jurisdictions, the questions and tasks in the final examination mirror the avoidance strategies of decontextualization of the conflict, one-sided accounts, and the avoidance of structural racism and sectarianism, which were all discussed in the previous Chapter. Teachers have little incentive to address controversial issues in the classroom in a context where the focus is set on learning and memorising knowledge for the final examination. Therefore, these avoidance strategies are primarily a consequence of educational policies.

Teachers have also identified parents and students as censors since they direct the focus on the preparation for the examination. Teacher 1 from the Jewish-Israeli school described this issue in the following excerpt:

> *They [the students] don't see in him [the teacher] a figure that they can speak with about it [values]. They believe what they believe- it's very different and they want the teacher to help them to get passed the exam. And they don't understand why he is speaking with them about values, "no you don't speak with us about values, you have to help us to pass the exam" and also their parents are very strong opinionated about that. So, and what happens even in the teacher training- you can see most of the teachers what they want from the teacher training, how to teach the kids better how to pass the exam! (…) Yes, so the teacher trainer didn't want it to be that way, it will be that way because all of the teachers that are in the training- this is what they want, this is what they came for. Yes, they want to help their students to do that. (Teacher 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Since the teacher training is tailored towards preparing students for the examination, this consumes most of the little training that is offered, leaving less time to train teachers in other areas of citizenship education such as how to discuss the conflict or other controversial issues. The teacher in the last excerpt also mentioned the pressure from parents, who participate as 'consumers' exercising choice over different schools to prepare their children, in their view, for entry to competitive schools and universities (Connell, 2013).

The policymakers quoted above described how the goal of education in both jurisdictions is to pass the final examination in secondary education, following the "logic of the market"

(Giroux, 1997:241) and the managerialist culture (Kilkauer, 2015). This places teachers under pressure to focus on the content that is relevant to the examination, regardless of whether they consider it to be important or empowering knowledge and learning themselves (see also Castro, 2010). Empowering knowledge and learning has been described in Chapter two as incorporating discussions of controversial issues (Hess, 2004a; Hess, 2004b; Hess and Avery, 2008) and critical political thinking (see Banks, 2008; Burbules and Berk, 1999; Johnson and Morris, 2010).

The lack of teacher training as reported by policymakers, principals and teachers has three major implications: first, it demonstrates that citizenship is not considered an important subject in terms of the managerialist culture since it does not contribute as significantly to students' future 'employability' as other subjects. Second, the way it is assessed and how teachers are trained is directed towards technical and individualised notions of citizenship that gloss over its controversial and critical aspects and reproduce the dominant neoliberal hegemony promoting performance. Third, the focus on the acquisition of knowledge to be tested in examinations allows the political elite to control and define what they see as relevant knowledge and to pressure schools, teachers, and students to follow this path that they have set.

## IDENTITY POLITICS AS A CENSOR

Another reason for heated and emotional discussions during citizenship lessons is the politics of identity that is reproduced by teachers and students in the classroom. Identity politics draws on identity as either a source of resistance or domination and can serve as a powerful hegemonic or counter-hegemonic tool, as described in Chapter two (Bauman, 2004; Bondi, 1993; Butler, 1993; Hall, 2000). The data presented in this section suggests that identity politics limits citizenship education's critical potential by silencing discussions about the conflict, racism, and sectarianism. Generally, identity politics is mediated subtly through community cultures that seek to promote and defend the interests of the community. For example, the data have shown that young people in Northern

Ireland and Israel are socialised into narratives that seek to justify their community's rights as a collective, as a nation or a state. The main argument of this section is that pressure is exerted on students and teachers to submit to dominant views, or at least to leave them unchallenged.

In Northern Ireland, this pressure stems from the communities, parents, and students that 'censor' teachers and other students' alternative views by creating an atmosphere of discomfort and fear, as will be discussed below. Additionally, in Israel, identity politics is woven into official policies and educational programmes (such as the preparation for military service) that promote dominant narratives and identities and protect them from criticism. In both societies, there is fear of criticising and questioning dominant views and discomfort among teachers and students. Consequently, this denies space for critical political thinking, discussions of controversial issues, and exchanges of different opinions in citizenship education.

## CENSORING CRITICALITY AND ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVES (ISRAEL)

Chapter one outlined policies that sanction schools and teachers when they teach about or commemorate the events of the 'Nakba day', on which Palestinians remember their expulsion and flight from the territory that is now the State of Israel (Peled-Elhanan, 2012). In addition to this restriction, which limits discussions in schools about narratives and historical events that challenge the dominant Zionist narrative, other policies restrict criticism towards the State of Israel and its institutions.

For example, in 2016 the Ministry of Education published a circular that presents guidelines on discussing controversial issues in the classroom, stating that:

> *Teachers should be encouraged to discuss with the students the positions that are legally and socially legitimate in the country while at the same time resisting the expression of illegal attitudes, including those that preach violence or racism. (Translated from Hebrew) (Ministry of Education, 2016:1)*

It could be argued that the purpose of this guideline is mainly to protect the classroom environment from incitement and hate speech. Yet, it also limits the teachers' freedom to criticise state institutions, including the Israeli Defence Forces (p.1). This becomes clear in the summary that outlines the changes to the previous instruction, providing the reason for the publication of this circular:

> *The circular sharpens the commitment of the speakers, teachers and external bodies to students to the very existence of the State of Israel and the State Education Law, and emphasises the prohibition against harming the legitimacy of the State of Israel and its state institutions. In addition, the circular stresses that external factors and external spokespersons whose activities include, inter alia, encouraging racism, discrimination, incitement, calling for violence, party propaganda (…) and a discourse that undermines the legitimacy of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. Speakers who have committed a disgraceful offence or an organization acting in violation of the laws of the State of Israel or of a body whose activities undermine the legitimacy of state bodies (such as the Israel Defence Forces and the courts) will not be allowed to enter [the classroom]. (Ministry of Education, 2016:2)*[76]

Consequently, this circular permits the Ministry of Education to discipline teachers who open the discussion about the concept of the Jewish and democratic state or the actions of the Israeli Defence Forces. While the curriculum seeks formally to encourage critical thinking (see for a description Bekerman and Cohen, 2017), the restrictions imposed on citizens to challenge the state and its institutions are also ingrained in citizenship education, as an older circular pointed out that it should teach citizens to be 'faithful' or 'loyal' to the state:

> *The education system seeks to educate its students to be engaged, active, law-abiding, moral and virtuous citizens with a critical sense, who serve the state faithfully. (Ministry of Education, 2009)*

[76] This has been translated from Hebrew.

Whilst the last quote mentions, on the one hand, the capacity of citizenship to possess a "critical sense", it emphasises, on the other hand, the ideal of "law-abiding" citizens that are faithful to the state. This understanding of citizenship is contradictory and can only be understood by considering that critical thinking is limited by the Zionist ethos of the state and its institutions of which criticism is restricted.

This censor on criticism affects Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Palestinian schools and teachers in Israel. The cases of Adam Verta and Adar Cohen illustrate that Jewish-Israeli teachers have also been placed under more pressure recently (see Introduction, page 6). These incidents have shown that it is risky for teachers to address controversial issues or views that are critical of the state's ideology or the military. In the excerpts below, one policymaker referred to these mechanisms of censoring and explained how teachers are pressured to avoid or even to fear to address certain topics in class:

> *And I think maybe in the last five to ten years, also in civics studies it is considered a very problematic subject matter at schools, so teachers might think "No they should be in line and that's all not going to the right or to the left." (Policymaker 4, Israel)*

> *Formally, every teacher can talk about their opinion in the class, but in the reality, it's a problem, because many teachers, Arab and Jewish teachers- now more Arab, because [there is] a security system [that] controls. But also in the Jewish system now, in the [last] seven years we have a problem for Jews [from] the left-wing (…) like Adam Verta or Adar Cohen and another person that [got kicked] out of the education system, and they are afraid to talk, because maybe- it's not just the government, also there is a lot of right[-wing] activities. (Policymaker 5, Israel)*

Another policymaker added that Arab-Palestinian teachers have been and are still monitored by intelligence agencies (Agbaria et al., 2015 Agbaria, 2016):

> *Like controlling the education system was like part of controlling the Arab population. (…) [The] military government, from 48 till 66, there was like the military was governing in the Arab cities, the Arab societies. (…) And this is what*

*it was like for 20 years and this is part of when I talked about the teachers and how they are afraid, they are still living this period. (Policymaker 1, Israel)*

Since 1948 and under the Zionist leadership the education system in Israel has functioned as a form of social control of the Arab-Palestinian population (Al-Haj, 1995). In the following focus group excerpt, Arab-Palestinian students were asked if they have alternative ways to learn about their history outside of school. They explained that while the Internet provides them with alternative information, they also fear being observed by the national intelligence services:

*S3: You know you can't look at anything on the Internet without having somebody else seeing what you are looking at. So, the second you write something wrong on the Internet, from their [Jewish-Israeli] perspective-*

*A: Do you feel scared sometimes?*

*S3: Yeah of course! You can't write anything you want.*

*S1: You're watched like! 24/7! But I don't know I guess it should be fine like we're watched but we're not doing anything wrong.*

*S3: Yeah but-*

*S1: Ok we are not terrorists just because we're Arabs- so ok watch us!*

*S3: Alright watch us, but the second you write something that you want to check out about yourself, they will explain it in the wrong way. They can take your information and turn it against you. (Focus group 1, Arab-Palestinian school)*

The students felt that their access to information and the freedom to express their opinion is limited. Additionally, they expressed fear that their activities and expression of their political views are observed and that they have to face consequences. In the next section, I will discuss another aspect that contributes to this self-censorship, which is military education as part of citizenship education.

## CITIZENSHIP AND MILITARY CONSCRIPTION: AN INEXTRICABLE LINK (ISRAEL)

Chapter one demonstrated that the inclusion of preparation for military service as an extra-curricular activity makes manifest the nationalistic nature of citizenship education (see Lemish, 2003). In the textbook, military service is described as part of citizenship, as a duty of the citizen (p.20), and enlisting in the army is termed as an expression of "civil identity", as part of being a member of the democratic state (Ministry of Education, 2017a:88).

Arab-Palestinian policymakers criticised the fact that preparation for military service and the service itself form part of citizenship education in Israel. In the following two excerpts, they outlined how the values promoted through military service clash with the values of democratic education and argued that these values reinforce the image of Arab-Palestinians as "the enemy":

> *Israel i[s] also a militaristic society. And one of the goals of the education system is to prepare the students to be good soldiers, it's part of the citizenship education in Israel. After 12 years they finish the school and immediately they [become] soldiers. (…) And in education, it's a contrast between if you want to build democratic citizenship and people who believe in peace and … co-existence …. it's in contrast to if you want them to be a good soldier! It's not the same, you have a contrast because in one case the Arabs are human[s] … and they have rights … but in the other case as a military soldier, you are supposed to see the Arab people, if they are people, as the enemy. (Policymaker 5, Israel)*

> *The values are very nationalist[ic] values, that the state, the symbols of the state, it's kind of a national education, not civi[c] education. And there is no questioning for example of the status of the Arab minority, there is no question about the issue of democracy, about the rights … not only for Arabs but also, for example, the right to obey or not obey in the army. It's all like the state is above everything. (…) [T]hese Jewish students that learn these things at the age of 16, 17- a year later they go to the army and they stand on the cross-border [control] and they stand at*

> *the checkpoints and they are oppressing the Palestinian minority and these are the citizens of the future! So, this is raising a society in which democracy is not a value. It's like a tool in order to make sure that the Jewish state will keep existing. (Policymaker 1, Israel)*

According to them, ideas that underpin the preparation for the military or the service itself express a nationalistic understanding of citizenship; promote patriotism and obedience to the state and a sense of duty to protect the country from its 'enemies' (see also Lemish, 2003). Consequently, this does not allow for questioning the state's status quo, since this would jeopardise these values of patriotism and the promotion of military service among young people. Both policymakers contrasted the image of the citizenship student with the soldier: whereas the former is educated about the values of democracy and human rights, the latter obeys orders and defends the country by force.

The support for the military and its importance is mirrored in the education system (Lemish, 2003). In the excerpt below, the Jewish-Israeli principal emphasised the importance of military service in general and as a central aspect of citizenship education:

> *Don't forget that in Israel the main obligation for all of us is the army. (…) [It forms] all the parts of their personality. Where he [the pupil completed] the army, it was with value for him, it's very very important. If somebody in our school, boy or girl will tell you that he is planning not to go to the army … he has to think about good reasons. (…) So the civic education does not begin [with] and does not finish [with] school. (Principal, Jewish-Israeli school)*

She also described the military service as a very valuable aspect of citizenship education that shapes the personality of the students. Significantly, these values resonate with those of republican citizenship, such as obedience and commitment to the community (Faulks, 2000; Heater, 1990). Importantly, while she rejected the capacity of citizenship education as a school subject to promote conflict transformation (cited earlier on page 215, she argued that the army can provide a means for bridging what she describes as "cultural difference" between Jews and Arabs:

*[M]aybe in the army, because in the army you meet people from all over Israel, so not just like the kibbutz and here and the villages, all the towns and the [different] economic situation and everything. (Principal, Jewish-Israeli school)*

Whilst it is unsurprising that the Jewish-Israeli school reproduces these policies and includes them as part of its ethos, the principal of the Arab-Palestinian school was also supportive of the military service. She contended that Arab-Palestinian citizens would receive more rights if they serve in the army, suggesting that the lack of rights is connected to a lack of loyalty towards the Jewish state. Consequently, both principals claimed that the inclusion of Arab-Palestinians in the military service can promote their inclusion into Israeli society. They reproduce an assimilation strategy that is also referred to in the textbook. The Defence Service Law from 1986 describes military service "as a way to integrate Israeli Arabs into Israeli society and to increase their identification with the state" (Ministry of Education, 2017a: 105). It overlooks the narrative and often dual national identification of Arab-Palestinians, suggesting that the discrimination and structural exclusion of Arab-Palestinian citizens could be solved through their assimilation into the Zionist ideology.

Therefore, it is not surprising that Jewish-Israeli students defined the military service as the most important aspect of citizenship, demonstrated by the following excerpt:

*A: So, what do you think is the most important thing about citizenship that you have been working on?*

*S1: Army.*

*S5: Yeah, I think the army is the most important one. Because every child that grows up in Israel knows that he will go to the army, it's not a question and it's not a-*

*S2: It's a fact.*

*S4: And even if you don't like it you need to, I think it's very important. We have to.*

*S5: To protect our country. (Focus group 4, Jewish-Israeli school, Year 9)*

In both schools, the military service was seen as an aspect of citizenship education. Yet, while Jewish-Israeli teachers and students emphasised its importance, in the Arab-Palestinian school only the school leadership supports the military service.

## COMMUNITIES AS CENSORS: NORTHERN IRELAND

Identity politics also plays an important role in censoring citizenship education in Northern Ireland. Yet, in contrast to Israel, it is not framed through the same nationalistic citizenship that provides the rationale for the status quo of Zionist dominance. Researchers in Northern Ireland suggested that there is a "culture of avoidance" in Northern Ireland (Lomas, 1997), also phrased by the famous poet Seamus Heaney in his poem "whatever you say, say nothing" (Heaney, 1975). It is argued that this atmosphere of politeness and avoidance to address the conflict allows maintaining ignorant and sectarian views under the surface (see Gallagher, 2011). One policymaker maintained that this culture of sidestepping is mirrored in the curriculum text:

> *[B]ecause the curriculum was generated by adults, it was often the hang-ups that adults have that found their way into the curriculum. (...) But it shows you how the curriculum has been put together by adults with adults thinking that these are the issues that young people will have. (...) I think the problem came from the teachers and from the adults. (...) I think they have been through the last 20 or 30 years and it is still a very sensitive issue and you know there is still things you don't talk about and these would have traditionally been things you don't talk about. And now they are expected to stand up in a class and discuss them openly, so I think you know- They had issues with identity and diversity. (Policy-maker 1, Northern Ireland)*

This statement reinforces the argument that educational policies in Northern Ireland avoid addressing the structural and political dimension of the conflict and its legacy. An environment that seeks to discourage from challenging ingrained, one-sided perspectives

on the conflict and the other communities perpetrates this 'culture of politeness'. This section discusses how communities censor teachers' autonomy to discuss the conflict in the classroom.

Despite the progress made by the Good Friday Agreement, disadvantaged areas in Northern Ireland continue to be affected by paramilitary violence (Knox, 2002). One policymaker referred to this in the next excerpt. He stated that paramilitary groups maintain their influence in both communities; an issue that he claimed is often not talked about since it is not in the interests of the political elite, who try to keep the paramilitaries "quiet", as he put it:

> *The money in a sense is the reason that these troubles continue, in my mind. Paramilitary groups are still being funded, they have a hold in our society and there is money to be made out of it. "The Troubles" generated money for both groups. When people come into this new, the first thing you look at you see there is Protestants and Catholics (…) what isn't coming out in a lot of the research and sadly isn't coming out- but I can maybe see why- is the role that the paramilitaries have played in creating this division and keeping this division. And (…) that politicians haven't necessarily helped. (…) [B]oth sides of the community then established themselves and just dividing their opposition as defending the community, but what you found was both sides of the community w[ere] effectively mafia! And still [are] in the communities! (…) they had their own form of justice within their communities. (…) And all sorts of things were going on and to my mind that still continues – except it is not talked about, we pretend it doesn't happen. What has happened now with the paramilitary groups, they became community leaders and they get funding! And in my mind, they get funding to keep them quiet, because if you don't fund them then they start causing trouble again. (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland)*

Shirlow and McEvoy (2008) stated that the political elite in Northern Ireland frequently draws on the narratives of violence and selective victimhood to mobilise either unionism-loyalism or nationalism-republicanism. They argued that the on-going political violence

is censored by the media or denounced as criminal, instead of referring to its politically-motivated character. The Protestant vice-principal suggested that this mutual relationship of reciprocal benefit and dependency between the paramilitaries and the political elite is still prevalent:

> *[I]t's about keeping the local communities that they [the political elite] represent, happy. As opposed to bring in a new vision, you know. And particularly in the Protestant working-class community (…) [T]he Unionist politicians have been referring to [the lack of aspiration, lack of academic performance among East Belfast working-class boys] and saying, "We need to make change because look at our community." So, there is a wee bit like "There is a problem." But they don't do anything about it you know, they say "We know there is a problem". And the problem was, you know the minister of education is a Republican, so what they are doing is they are using the difficulty that they can see in their community to beat the minister with because we hate him because he is a Nationalist Republican. So, it's all about party politics, you know "Let's beat Sinn Fein." So, it is really backward like. (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

Related to this, one policymaker claimed that the sidestepping of controversy and the maintenance of the status quo is part of a broader strategy of compliance in education in Northern Ireland:

> *I think because of the way society works and the school system, you are basically taught to be compliant, obey authority, don't ask questions or at least not too many and behave in certain ways and accept the status quo. (…) From my point of view, I think politicians would have been complacent for a long, long time. (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland)*

Consequently, he concluded that teachers' avoidance of controversial issues is a result of censoring by the broader 'culture of politeness' or silence:

> *[T]eachers often don't have these sorts of conversations and it is that controversial issues thing (…) teachers will avoid talking about things that they*

*consider to be an issue because it can raise some sort of problems for them. (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland)*

He argued that addressing controversial issues can cause 'problems' for teachers and in some communities, teachers struggle with *"what is safe to talk about and what is not safe to talk about"* (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland).

The Protestant school is located in such an area. Chapter one discussed how paramilitary groups retain control over working-class neighbourhoods in Belfast (Jarman, 2004; Knox, 2002); by exerting an informal justice system mainly through 'punishment' beatings and shootings, through violence and organised crime (Jarman, 2004). Jarman (2004) stated that young people are either 'recruited' and attracted to paramilitary groups or rebel against them. This issues was raised by Protestant students during the focus groups. They described the violence promoted by paramilitaries as a cause for on-going tensions and how young people get involved in paramilitary activities:

*S5: But there is like- people are being shot. (…)*

*S3: There is always riots like where I live like I look from my bedroom and see them all running about and throwing bricks. (Focus group 1, Protestant school)*

*S4: Basically the paramilitaries say you have done something bad, (...) but the police wouldn't want- [to do something about it]* (…) *If like the IRA, the UDA or the UVF found out, they were at your house and they would sort you out.*

*S3: Like they blow your windows in or they like do your kneecaps.*

*S4: (…) the IRA and the UDA can say something about that and say to the person like "If you don't kneecap him- we will". So that's like actually kill him [a young person that got involved in criminal activities] like put a bullet in his head and all. That's how serious it gets. (Focus Group 2, Protestant school)*

*S2: Maybe the religious groups. And UVF and stuff, that's citizenship.*

*S3: Yeah probably religious groups- is that where it came from?*

*S2: Because that's what it is citizenship, that's where it all originally came from, all citizens.*

*S4: Yeah that's where all the violence comes out, the IRA, UVF.*

*S2: Because they're all Unionists and Loyalists.*

*S3: Yeah everyone's war is on because- I don't see the point of having wars now all over. (Focus group 2, Protestant school)*

*A: What is it about citizenship [that causes trouble]?*

*S1: About religion and the police- between Unionists and Nationalists.*

*S3: Because people that's what people think, that this is the right way.*

*A: So, it's about political views?*

*S1: Yeah. (Focus group 1, Protestant school)*

S4*: Also like behaviour as well like, it makes some more war, like what they [referring to paramilitaries] are doing.*

*S3: And then there is people's reactions as well to it, like say their parents found out that they are doing it and like they don't really punish them. (…) (Focus group 2, Protestant school)*

Interestingly, the last excerpt exemplifies the ambivalent attitudes that some young people have towards the paramilitaries. Jarman (2004) argued that the paramilitary is seen either as "a hero or an enemy", acting as "a defender of the community" (p.435), sustaining itself through a "mix of threat and admiration" (Jarman, 2016:218). While students tended to refer to this atmosphere of threat, in the last excerpt they also confirmed the role of the paramilitaries as 'correcting' the 'anti-social behaviour' of young people when their parents fail to do so.

The influence of the paramilitary groups is also present in the classroom. In the following excerpt, the vice-principal referred to his personal experience with raising controversial issues in the classroom. He suggested that it is difficult and even dangerous for teachers to address issues that could criticise their community or the paramilitaries:

> *I have to be so careful when talking to the kids because, despite the fact I was brought up in a loyalist community and had friends whose family was in the UDA, my own personal perspective, I despise it! And I think they were murderers. But I can't say that to these kids, because some of those kids, their fathers are in prison, you know. I mean one of the videos- this was actually quite dangerous- I showed them a video of [an incident where someone from the UDA shot people from the IRA] (...) Now, I could have [the attacker's] family contact the school saying "This was completely inappropriate", but I was just showing a news article you know- just this is what was in the news! I was to show them these were the things that have happened- (...) So, it is really difficult, it is a minefield. And this is actually why in some schools the teachers just think "It's too much risk- not gonna risk it". (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

He explained that due to the fear that parents or the community might complain or act upon the teacher challenging the views of the community or actions by the paramilitaries, some teachers sidestep teaching about these controversial issues. In another statement, he described the community ethos as shielding the community from criticism, formulating it as "[t]his is our community, you know and we believe in our community" (Vice-principal, Protestant school).

Researchers (Jarman, 2004; 2016; Knox, 2002) argued that in some areas in Northern Ireland, communities and paramilitary groups promote a culture of commemoration that celebrates ancient battles or actions by ex-prisoners, wars, and a "culture of the gun" (Jarman, 2004:435). According to Jarman, this glorification of violence is concerning, since it serves to legitimise violence, killings, and murders, sustaining sectarian and racist attitudes by framing it as part of 'the struggle' or 'resistance'. Like the vice-principal, other teachers in Northern Ireland also emphasised during the interviews that they see it

as their task to challenge these attitudes and the glorification of violence in their communities. However, due to the fear of repercussions, they feel uncomfortable and restrained to criticise racist and sectarian views or one-sided accounts of the conflict.

Another way of censoring that is particular to working-class communities was described by teachers from both schools. According to Jarman, in the aftermath of the Good Friday Agreement, policymakers have failed to provide economic opportunities in working-class neighbourhoods, which further marginalised young people who have sought opportunities through criminal activities. Unemployment and a lack of educational opportunities contribute to young people's sense of alienation and their rejection of authority structures, leading some of them to get involved in minor criminal activities, labelled as 'hoods', who are known for rebelling against social norms (Jarman, 2004). Related to this, some of the students' statements and mind-maps suggest that their background imposes on them a stigma, which is associated with low expectations and aspirations, as one teacher argued. In both schools, teachers explained that lower aspirations and 'academic difficulties' are a result of growing up in the respective environment:

> *Coming from an area like this (…) our children would be very lacking themselves confidence (…) I suppose down through the years because of "the Troubles" and the crime down here they have almost become like- there were stereotypes and it's almost as if they accepted that stereotype of failure and you know their community wasn't as good as this or that or the other. (…). And I think the teaching of citizenship it broadens it out, it also shows them that (…) there are a lot of children that are worse of than they are. And I think through showing them things like that, through citizenship, it helps broaden their awareness and help develop their own self-confidence I think too and having respect for others. (Teacher 2, Catholic school)*

> *So, it's a difficult enough area (…) the area itself would have had quite a strong paramilitary influence in the past … which maybe feeds in quite a bit too in terms of the academic difficulties that we have. (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

The Catholic teacher's statement is infused with hope that citizenship has the potential to empower his students. However, the stereotypes related to low expectations of potential academic performance imposed on young people from the lower social strata make their access to educational opportunities, in general, more difficult (Rist, 1970). In this sense, low aspirations act as another censor for citizenship education because they alienate students from citizenship. Earlier on pages 206-7, students from Northern Ireland described citizenship as 'elitist' or as being for more affluent parts of society and thus not for students with low educational aspirations and expectations. Whilst this understanding of citizenship by the students is in parts accurate (reflecting the idea that citizenship is a form of cultural hegemony as one of the central arguments of this thesis), the low aspirations and expectations imposed on them turn also into a self-fulfilling prophecy. This becomes clear when comparing the Catholic and Protestant working-class students with the Arab-Palestinian students. All three groups are alienated from citizenship, yet among Arab-Palestinian students, there are higher aspirations and an ethos of educational success that directs them to reclaim their individual rights as a central aspect of citizenship in Israel (see Agbaria, 2016a). Whilst this section discussed how communities act as censors, the next section extends this notion to parents and students, who partly reproduce a managerialist culture, performativity, and identity politics.

## PUPILS AND PARENTS AS CENSORS IN ISRAEL AND NORTHERN IRELAND

The excerpts below show the challenges that citizenship education teachers are confronted within Northern Ireland and Israel. The formal and informal restrictions imposed on them make it very difficult to address the structural dimension of the conflict and to challenge racism and sectarianism among their students.

> *The biggest challenges are not engraving even deeper negative prejudice in their own eyes. (…) I have to come planned and prepared when I'm talking about these things so that I don't say something that's gonna lead them into difficulty or lead me into difficulty. And the other thing that's really difficult is that sometimes*

*you're presenting views that are completely contrary to their parents and so when they go home, because they do talk to their parents- when they go home, they will have the conversation about what we were doing today and "Mr [name of vice-principal] was telling us about and he was telling us about this" and it could be completely contrary to what their parents believe. So, the parents rather than saying "Well that's a different perspective", they see it as "That was an attack on my culture (…)"- (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

The vice-principal suggested that parents not only act as censors due to their role as consumers of education but also through their acceptance (or disapproval) of teachers who contest views, narratives, attitudes, and values that are dominant among the parents and their community. One policymaker from Israel also referred to this issue:

*If they [parents] hear that one teacher talked about the Nakba for example in Jewish schools, they can write a letter to the Ministry of Education, they talk with the manager and they talk with all the parents and the school. (Policymaker 5, Israel)*

Policymakers and the vice-principal cited above referred to parents' fear that their children might become critical of their own communities' values, beliefs, and narratives and to the possibility that they might complain to the school or even to the educational authorities.

*[S]ome parents are worried that their children are somehow turned to the other side, whoever the other side may be. Their parents don't want them to know about other stuff in case you know it somehow stains them or you know or damages them you know. (…) And I think with the identity in Northern Ireland, there is that great fear that you somehow get your identity attacked. Yeah, I think there has to be somehow space for you to be content with your own identity but also not threatened by somebody else's. (Policymaker 4, Northern Ireland)*

*I would say families that have been involved keep throwing it at their children, because there is a bit of these things you know perhaps they want them to remember this you know that carry on and we're this and we're that and we- so*

*there is another community thing of division that perpetuates and continues to do that. (Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland)*

*[Y]ou're challenging some of the cultures that the children have been brought into, were born into and you're challenging the cultures of the families that they live in and that they go home to, you know. (Vice-principal, Protestant school)*

These excerpts suggest that coming to terms with the past is resisted by the communities who perceive critical reflection and self-critique as a 'threat', disrupting the reproduction of the community narrative of themselves as the victim. As discussed in Chapter four, the lack of scope for teachers to challenge these 'entrenched' views and attitudes towards the conflict, sectarianism, and racism leads to students developing one-sided accounts of these issues. Another Protestant teacher argued that it is difficult to talk about issues related to identity in the classroom, as this provides "a racist forum" or "a voice for the racists" (Teacher 2, Protestant school). This statement underpins teachers' reluctance to challenge students' views.

In some focus groups, it became manifest that students also censor each other besides censoring their teachers. The interchange between Catholic students below illustrates the pressure that can be exerted (subtly on children) to subscribe to the common narrative:

*S4: Miss I give it a go- because it's like because people think they are more superior to others like because of their race or their religion or- all of that and that's about it.*

*S3: No!*

*S4: I haven't really thought about it that much.*

*S3: It's all wrong! Ireland is one! One day Ireland and Northern Ireland will come together and will all 32 counties will be just one. (Focus group 3, Catholic school)*

In both schools in Israel, teachers and students describe how discussions about the conflict and racism can become very heated, which is discussed in the three excerpts below:

*S1: Yeah but it's very complicated [talking about the conflict], so it gets a bit- too complicated, too heated.*

*A: I see. Because everybody has their-*

*S3: Opinion. (Focus group 1, Jewish-Israeli school)*

*S1: There are some things that we can't say, not everything you want to say you can. (…)*

*S3: No. There is something we can't say.*

*S1: It's not the right place and the right time. (…) Political things.*

*S3: We can't say everything like political things, we can't say it here-*

*S2: We need to find the right person. There [are] different opinions from different people, so it will be difficult for them to understand what we think about this.*

*S1: There is people who don't accept your opinion because it's different from their own. (…)*

*S3: It [discussion about racism] became a big fight in the lesson.*

*A: Because did it get very emotional or-*

*S3: Yes. This fight came because not everybody accepts each other's experience, opinion so that's why we fight. (…)*

*S1: In school, I think it [the conflict] can't [be discussed]- because it's a political thing.*

*S3: Nobody can say "I think that I think that"-*

*S1: Teachers can't do it. They cannot express their opinion in class. (Focus group 3, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Interestingly, the Arab-Palestinian students are aware that their teacher is not permitted to teach them about the impact of the 1948 war on the Palestinian population or that the recently published circular does not allow teachers to express views that are critical towards institutions of the state (Ministry of Education, 2016). Hence, one student concluded that the conflict cannot be discussed in the classroom also because students do not seem to trust each other. Their teacher elaborated on this lack of trust among his students and pointed to their different national affiliations:

> *Maybe not in the class [to have discussions about different identities]. Because they know each other so maybe they are afraid to say what they think. Maybe in small groups, so they can [speak about] their identity more true[ly], they don't have to listen to everyone. Because you know someone will tell you "I'm Israeli" and someone will tell you "I'm Palestinian", so they will look at each other in a way. (Teacher, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Importantly, the teacher from the Arab-Palestinian school stated that there is disagreement or tension among his students when it comes to discussions about identity. They have different national affiliations and feel different levels of connection to Israeli citizenship.

> *S1: Maybe that we are confused. We don't know what our country is, what our nationality is. We are not sure about it. Sometimes we think we are Palestinians and sometimes we are Israelis.*
>
> *S2: Because we are born in Israel.*
>
> *S1: Because Palestine it is for our grandparents and we grow up with "This is called Palestine" and then we have an Israeli passport so when we go to the airport, we are Israeli. So, we don't know if we are Palestinians or Israelis. And when we go to another country and they ask us "Where are you from?" so we don't know if we have to say Palestinian or Israeli.*
>
> *S2: Because some countries hate the Jews.*
>
> *S1: When we go to Egypt and we say we are Palestinians they say "you mean Israel?" we say, "No it's Palestine." (...) And sometimes you can't say that you*

*are Palestinian, in some countries. (…) And some people don't understand this and they think we don't have a nationality. (Focus group 4, Arab-Palestinian school)*

Describing oneself as 'Israeli' means claiming ones' rights as a citizen and might be more appropriate in places where people are critical towards Palestine, whereas they define themselves as 'Palestinian' in places where people are critical of Israel. This refers to the ideological potential of these identities, which are both constructed in the political discourse based on the denial of 'the other'. While cultural differences are incommensurable, ideological discourses might construct them as mutually exclusive (Bhabha, 1990; 1994). In the following excerpt, students argued that those who accept the status quo define themselves as 'Israelis,' while they themselves seek to reclaim their Palestinian identity by not 'forgetting' and resisting to normalise the reality of the discrimination in Israel:

*S1: For us, we think it's important [citizenship] but maybe other young people [at] our age they forgot about it.*

*A: Do you think other things are important for them? Or why is that? Or they are not interested?*

*S1: Maybe, they don't want to. They are saying "ok now we are living in Israel- so ok we are Israelis".*

*S2: It's comfortable-*

*S1: They don't want to prove "No we are Palestinians. This area was Palestine in the past."*

*A: I see. So, for them, it's easier to live with it and-*

*S1: Yeah to forget and to keep this situation. (Focus group 4, Arab-Palestinian school)*

This disagreement in terms of identity is particular to the Arab-Palestinian school, where two ideologies are competing; on the one hand Palestinian nationalism and on the other

hand the assimilation strategy used by Israel. This reflects how Arab-Palestinian students in Israel are socialised into two different and competing narratives, on the one hand from their community and on the other hand the one mediated through the curriculum.

Censoring is likely to take place during the eruption of political violence between the two groups. One policymaker recounted her own experience of working on a project where children from the different communities play football together, which became tense during the Intifada:

> *And it fail[ed] because of the first crisis in the Intifada, everything failed there. They weren't able to sit and talk to each other- "You are a murderer! I'm afraid to grow because of you and your friends and family" and stuff like that. So, it's without the infrastructure of patience and humanity and learning the culture of the other, there is no chance of really living together. (Policymaker 2, Israel)*

This example points to how discussions about the conflict, racism, and sectarianism are likely to be silenced and depoliticised. In Israel, it appears to be the case that meetings between Israelis and Palestinians are avoided to due to emotional adverse responses by the participants. Consequently, parents and students act as censors of these discussions in citizenship education, since their strong responses make it more likely for teachers to avoid them.

## CONCLUSION

In this Chapter, it was argued that schools, teachers, and students are prevented from discussing the structural dimensions of the conflict, racism, and sectarianism due to two major censors: a managerialist culture that sets the focus on performance and identity politics that discourage criticism of major narratives promoted by the curriculum and/or communities. Although both censors are directed from 'above', they are reproduced partly by parents and students leading them also to act as censors. Parents and students demand

that teachers prepare them in the best way of being successful in the final examination and are also influenced by the dominant narratives of their communities.

Firstly, the focus on performance and the downgrading of citizenship as a technical and individualistic subject in the curriculum, oriented towards forming future citizens mainly as contributors and consumers of the economic system, gives some indication about the hegemonic culture behind the subject. Whilst a technical concept of citizenship tries to give the impression of teaching and examining 'neutral', apolitical knowledge (Giroux, 1997), it is permeated by a political agenda that suits the interests of political and economic elites (Apple, 2004).

The focus on the acquisition of knowledge to be tested in examinations allows the political elite to control and define what they see as relevant knowledge and to pressure schools, teachers, and students to follow this path that they have set. Additionally, the pressure of performance also serves as a distraction from discussing issues related to the conflict or identity, which is a difficult task for citizenship teachers who are usually not provided with adequate training to teach about these complex topics. While some policymakers blame teachers for their reluctance to address controversial issues and their inclination to focus on the examination, this problem mainly derives from the policy-level, since the curriculum and educational policies are dominated by a managerialist culture and a focus on performance.

Closer towards the final examination, the pedagogical approach becomes more focused on the memorisation of difficult concepts as preparation for the test. As a result, the space to promote critical thinking and to address controversial issues becomes more limited. Whilst policymakers state that teachers are mainly interested in training that helps them to prepare their students for the final examination, teachers state that pressure is exerted on them by educational policies, schools, parents, and students.

The data demonstrated how students reproduce the discourse of 'employability' and 'personal development' in Northern Ireland. Students from both schools are predominantly from communities that are affected by unemployment, lack of aspirations and youth criminality among other issues (see Jarman, 2004). There is a strong emphasis

in the Catholic school and to some extent also in the Protestant school to counter these effects, by fostering students' aspirations and self-esteem. However, this seems to be linked to an individualistic, apolitical concept of citizenship.

There is a similar tendency in the Arab-Palestinian school, where performance in the final examination and the integration into Israeli society is emphasised over the political struggle by the principal. While this trend is less prevalent in the Jewish-Israeli school, the principal still described an individualistic understanding of citizenship among her students and some teachers argued that their teaching is limited by the requirement to prepare for the final examination. Hence, in both societies, the managerialist culture and the focus on performance create a notion of citizenship as a minimal, passive and 'technical' subject (Chapter two discussed this form of citizenship education in more detail, McLaughlin, 1992; Torney-Purta et al., 1999).

Secondly, this Chapter discussed how identity politics is officially reproduced by policies and educational programmes and unofficially by the communities, parents, and young people. The excerpts presented earlier in Chapter four about students' accounts of the conflict illustrated how they are influenced by the narratives from their families and communities. Yet, these provide only a partial account of the conflict. The discussion of the data in this Chapter suggest that this partial or one-sided understanding of the conflict stems from the fact that teachers and students circumvent discussing alternative narratives and challenging dominant views in the classroom.

In Israel, three educational policy examples were mentioned that effectively censor criticality: firstly, policies were introduced that legally restrict teachers' criticism towards political institutions and the military. Secondly, schools and teachers are reprimanded if they commemorate the events of the Nakba, which omits narratives of the conflict that challenge the dominant Zionist narrative. Thirdly, the preparation for the military service as a central aspect of citizenship promotes values that are running counter those promoted by democratic or human rights education, constructing the 'other' as an enemy instead of a human being as one policymaker described it (see pages 213-14). Therefore, it is unsurprising that identity politics is reproduced by students, parents, and partly by teachers

themselves, creating an atmosphere where critical political thinking is discouraged. Additionally, these educational policies facilitate a form of assimilation, which becomes visible in both schools through the support for the military service by the principals or national affiliations with Israel by the Arab-Palestinian students.

In Northern Ireland, the politicisation of identities has contributed to a culture of violence that has tolerated and mobilised sectarian fears and beliefs in the past (Fulton, 1991). Partly, this is still the case in working-class communities where paramilitaries continue to exert violence (Knox, 2002). This was confirmed by the data, as students described how paramilitaries remain active in their communities and wield influence over young people. Importantly, their identity politics is partly reproduced by communities, parents, and young people, influencing them to censor discussions about the conflict or sectarianism.

Hence, the third 'censor' outlined in this Chapter are parents and students. In conflict-affected societies like Northern Ireland and Israel, it can be emotionally challenging to discuss issues related to the conflict (Cooper and Nichol, 2015; Zembylas, 2007). Across all schools, teachers and students described how young people are influenced by the political views of their families (see Figures 7; 10; 15; 16; 17; 18; 25; 26; 35; 36). Some teachers state that they find it difficult to challenge these views among their students and both teachers and students report that discussions of controversial issues are sometimes avoided. For example, in the Arab-Palestinian school, students are divided along identifications as 'Palestinians' or 'Israelis', mirroring views that are either supportive of the integration of Arab-Palestinians into Israel's society or that emphasise the collective national identity and history of Arab-Palestinians. Since these discussions can become very heated and personal, the teacher and the students state they often sidestep discussing these identifications in the classroom.

This further suggests that emotion and affect play a central role in education about conflict and identity. Boler (1997; 1999) and Boler and Zembylas (2003) have stressed that education needs to address emotions that act as a form of hegemony and social control, achieved through subtle dominant discourses of emotions that underpin existing power relations. Students and teachers from Northern Ireland and Israel expressed emotions such

as fear from authorities and communities, anger about being criticized or anger as directed at the 'other' community, or love for the land, country, and community. These emotions are partly evoked by powerful ideologies and arguably impede on students' ability to engage in critical inquiry. Boler and Zembylas (2003) maintained that critical inquiry can cause feelings of anger, grief, disappointment, or resistance and thus charges teachers with a difficult task since they are also confronted with ethical questions by challenging students' and their own comfort zones.

As a result, the data from both societies demonstrate that it is safer and more comfortable for teachers to sidestep challenging dominant views on the conflict or to address structural racism and sectarianism. Additionally, the managerialist culture acts as a further impediment to critical thinking or discussing controversial issues. This is reminiscent of Giroux and McLaren's (1986) claim that teachers are constrained by nation-state ideologies and by the increasing submission of education to the logic of the market.

# CONCLUSION

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine the state of citizenship education in relation to identity in Northern Ireland and Israel in the context of a Catholic, Protestant, Arab-Palestinian, and Jewish-Israeli school. It has added to the existing body of research about citizenship education in these two societies: in Northern Ireland, it confirmed concerns expressed by McEvoy (2007) that citizenship education is misinterpreted by those who facilitate it as it does not provide opportunities for young people to engage with different narratives about the conflict and does not sufficiently address the violence and injustices of the past. The findings further underline Emerson and McCully's (2014) suggestion that teachers might sidestep addressing the recent conflict in the classroom due to anxiety about students' and their parents' reactions. In Israel, the data reinforce findings by Pinson (2008) that Arab-Palestinian students are marginalised and alienated by citizenship

education, while they are ‘empowered’ to some extent by their school through discourses of individual rights and performance (Agbaria, 2016a; Pinson and Agbaria, 2015).

However, through sidestepping and censoring most young people only gather superficial knowledge about the past which impacts on their understanding of the recent conflict, as Barton and McCully (2012) warned in their research. Instead of learning about the complexities of the conflict in the classroom, students tend to reproduce selectively the dominant narratives from their communities, which are not challenged in the classroom (McCully, 2010).

In his review of research conducted in citizenship education in Israel, Cohen (2017) found that despite its potential to provide a unifying pluralistic framework, the subject matter has been used as a means to advance sectarian views. He explained that changes to the subject matter do not only follow educational goals of creating competent citizens but also to promote the political agenda of those who seek to influence dominant conceptions of citizenship in Israel, which resonates with the findings of this study. Importantly, Cohen argued that there is a lack of engagement with different views and controversy (referring to Hess, 2009), suggesting a form of avoidance of controversial issues. He concluded that most research in the field of citizenship education focused on the study of documents and that there is a need for the study of different and competing interpretations of citizenship by teachers and students in the classroom.

Hence, this thesis has added to the existing body of research by confirming and further clarifying previous findings and by providing a comprehensive study of the policy, school, and classroom level, combining interviews and observations with the study of documents. It has further examined the theoretical links and practical processes that reinforce citizenship education as cultural hegemony and demonstrated how these processes permeate different layers of policies, schools, and individual teachers and students.

Following demands by Noguera (2004) who argued that research in education needs to shift away from focusing on status to a new focus on broader structures that influence educational opportunities; the qualitative approach of this study facilitated an exploration of structures and processes. I claim that a better understanding of structures also emerged

from the fact that the study investigated how structures and cultural hegemony affect different communities, enabling a deeper theoretical understanding of cultural hegemony as Yin (2003) and Campbell (2010) suggested in the case study approach.

Additionally, the cross-cultural case study approach has further highlighted the cultural specificity of citizenship education in terms how it needs to be responsive to the experiences of different groups in society. While citizenship education tends to reflect mainly the majority groups culture, histories, and identities (as in the case of the middle-class Jewish-Israeli school) it often omits those of minorities (the Arab-Palestinian school) and alienates groups that are socio-economically disadvantaged (the Catholic and the Protestant school). Different groups and communities respond differently to concepts such as citizenship, human rights, democracy, or cosmopolitanism (see also Staeheli, 2010). Without taking these cultures, narratives, identities and experiences of minority and disadvantaged groups into account, citizenship will not be accepted as an inclusive, empowering, and valuable concept by others than the dominant groups in society.

As a personal reflection, this research provided me with the opportunity to become familiar with two different societies. By keeping a reflective journal throughout the doctoral research, I can trace the development of my thinking and ideas about the people and life in Northern Ireland and Israel. Living in both places for more than two years each was a valuable experience not only in terms of researching the contexts more thoroughly; being confronted with different people, cultures, languages and viewpoints on a daily basis allowed me to grow as a person. By doing research with the head and the heart, I think one can learn the most from meeting people who are different from oneself and by being open to listening to their views.

The central theoretical conclusions are outlined in the following, finishing with a discussion about how citizenship education can become a more meaningful subject in conflict-affected societies.

## HOW IS CULTURAL HEGEMONY EXPRESSED THROUGH THE OVERT AND COVERT CITIZENSHIP CURRICULA?

The discussion of the data has shown that avoidance and censoring as processes in citizenship education, shape cultural hegemony. Chapter four outlined the different avoidance strategies that dominate citizenship education, such as the flexible approach of the curricula, the absence of critical (political) thinking, the decontextualization of the conflict and conservative/liberal multiculturalism. All these strategies share in common that they are supportive of a cultural hegemony that sustains the status quo and privileges of political and economic elites through ensuring the reproduction of their ideologies (Althusser, 1971; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Drawing on Laclau (1992; 1996; 2000), citizenship education policies are underpinned by a vocabulary of empty signifiers in Northern Ireland and Israel that have been presented throughout the thesis such as 'reconciliation', 'community relations', 'peace education', 'tolerance', 'equality', and 'co-existence' that fail to address the conflict's critical aspects. By failing to provide alternative accounts of the conflict and to challenge structures of racism and sectarianism, these signifiers even reproduce conflict to some extent. For example, the community relations and peace education paradigm have been criticised due to failure to address structural issues related to the conflicts (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012; McEvoy et al., 2006; McEvoy, 2007). Consequently, the universality of citizenship is undermined by the particularity of a dominant group, elite or class that dilutes the universal with their particular interests (Laclau, 1992; 1996; 2000).

The avoidance of discussing the conflict comes to light in two different ways: firstly, citizenship policies and teaching de-contextualise the conflict by breaking the link between events in the past, current divisions as well as on-going violence in both societies. Since students are not provided with information about the conflict through citizenship education, they draw on narratives that they grow up within their families and communities. These usually present partial and one-sided accounts that are at risk to reinforce sectarian and racist attitudes.

Secondly, identity tends to be approached in both societies through conservative/liberal multiculturalism that does not challenge structural sectarianism and racism (McLaren, 1995); and it reinforces essentialised constructions of identity and culture. The result of these framings of conflict and identity is that they are de-politicised and constructed as resulting from individual prejudice. Giroux (1997) warned that the individualisation of social problems such as poverty and racism distracts from the responsibility of the political establishment to offer political solutions to these problems. This is reminiscent of the criticism from participants in this study who claim that this individualisation of responsibility represents a comfortable approach for the political elite as a policymaker from Northern Ireland suggested (see page 231, quotes from Policymaker 3, Northern Ireland) since it sidesteps addressing the political roots of the conflict and the need to find political solutions.

While sidestepping is facilitated by policies that leave schools and teachers at liberty to avoid, this is further reinforced through censoring of discussing controversial political issues and critical political thinking. The first censor introduced in Chapter five was the managerialist culture (Kilkauer, 2015). The Chapter argued that in order to reproduce itself, the elite exerts a neoliberal/managerialist culture on society (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1997; Kilkauer, 2015), infused with an ethos of performance and individual educational success. Citizenship education is diluted in both societies by this managerialist culture that downgrades citizenship to an individualistic, marketized concept, forming citizens mainly as consumers and contributors to the economy. This culture is a powerful censor and expression of cultural hegemony since it foregrounds the individual as the source of social problems and not the system, giving the impression of a 'false generosity' by offering education to develop skills of employability, for example, as a response to broader socio-political issues (Leonard and McLaren, 2002).

Identity politics is another censor of the critical potential of citizenship education. It draws on essentialised images of identity (Bhabha, 1994; Butler, 1993; Grillo, 1995; Hall, 2000; Spivak, 1990), which reproduce sectarianism and racism in a sense that they maintain the existing system of power and privilege (Tatum, 2000; Wellman, 1993). In both societies, images of what it means to be a 'Jew,' a 'Palestinian,' a 'Catholic,' or, a 'Protestant' are

conveyed that fail to represent the fluidity and internal diversity of these identities, for the sake of securing the integrity of each community. Moreover, these identities can be exploited to mobilise political interests such as to claim ownership of the land, to justify the communities' privilege and the denial of privileges or rights of the 'other' community. Identity politics further restrains schools' and teachers' autonomy to address the conflict, racism, and sectarianism in a critical manner, since a critical examination of narratives and identities might challenge communities' sense of patriotism and their particular claims of belonging to the contested land.

In Northern Ireland, this discourse about identities and political claims is mainly sustained through the communities, but also through the political elite. Researchers (Jarman, 2004; Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008) previously suggested that politicians exploit sectarian attitudes and fears in order to mobilise political support from communities and some participants stated that this is still the case (see statements by policymaker 3 and the vice-principal on pages 230-5).

In Israel, the politicisation of identities is expressed through educational policies, security policies, and citizenship rights. While a Jewish-Israeli citizenship identity is prioritised in the public sphere, Arab-Palestinian citizens mainly maintain their own discourse about nationalism and belonging in the private sphere.

The reality of how the conflict, racism, and sectarianism are dealt with is a product of educational policies in citizenship education in Northern Ireland and Israel. Citizenship education is largely cleared from controversial or critical content and infused with "a superficial and sanitised form of pluralism" (Gilborn, 2006:99) that does not challenge sectarianism or racism. The data presented bolster Gilborn's (2006) critique of citizenship education as a 'placebo' for a public policy that pretends to treat racism (or sectarianism and the conflict) by promoting a liberal-universalist credo that only confirms the status quo of existing privileges and conflicts. Under the logic of the market and nation-state ideologies, education functions as a mechanism of social control (Apple, 1988; Freire, 1985; Giroux, 1987). It is downgraded to a form of banking education (Freire, 1970),

which is a tool for the powerful to maintain their domination (Mann, 1987), to domesticate the masses, and to turn them into "receiving objects" (Freire, 1970:77).

## HOW DO DIFFERENT SCHOOLS RESPOND TO CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION POLICIES?

The strategies of avoidance and censoring that exist on the policy level trickle down into schools and classrooms. In response to the second research question about how different schools in Northern Ireland and Israel respond to citizenship education policies, two processes predominate in the data: cultural reproduction and resistance.

Cultural hegemony is sustained through cultural reproduction (Althusser, 1971; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990), which became manifest through participants' constructions of citizenship, the conflict, and identity. Students and teachers draw to some extent on essentialised identities, reproducing dominant discourses in each community about what it means to be 'a Catholic,' 'a Protestant,' 'a Jewish-Israeli' or, 'an Arab-Palestinian'. These identity constructions that are built on narratives about one's past, struggle, and victimhood (see Bar-Tal and Halperin, 2013), impact on how students and teachers understand the conflict.

Despite teachers' more balanced understandings of the conflict, they do not transmit this knowledge to their students; by avoiding challenging one-sided accounts and racist/sectarian attitudes. Teachers struggle to address controversial issues related to the conflict and identity in the classroom due to the lack of time and training to facilitate discussions of controversial issues and the (emotionally) strong reactions by students and their parents. Policymakers and teachers confirmed Emerson and McCully's (2014) claim that teachers might avoid addressing the recent conflict in the classroom due to anxiety about the reactions by students and their parents or being seen as "complicit in indoctrination" (p.16). Moreover, teachers also fear repercussions for criticising or challenging these narratives. In Northern Ireland, teachers feel intimidated by the paramilitary influence on the communities while teachers in Israel are afraid of sanctions by the educational authorities for criticising state institutions or teaching about the Nakba.

Consequently, teachers sidestep challenging or clarifying students' (often one-sided and uncritical) accounts of the conflict and essentialised views of identities. It was mentioned earlier that this resonates with findings by Barton and McCully (2012), who warned that young people only gather superficial knowledge about the past that impacts on their understanding of the recent conflict. Consequently, students might reproduce selectively the dominant narratives from their communities (McCully, 2010). Other researchers described silence or sidestepping of the conflict as a common feature in post-conflict societies, which serves to "create a sense of 'normality'" (p.504) and makes everyday encounters with the 'enemy' possible and more comfortable (Eastmond and Selimovic, 2012), prioritising to keep a sense of harmony (Loader and Hughes, 2017).

Additionally, it was mentioned earlier that the managerialist culture restrains teachers' and students' ability to discuss the conflict, controversial issues, and to perform critical political thinking. In Northern Ireland, the framing of citizenship as 'employability' and 'personal development' embody individualistic and marketized notions of citizenship, reflecting the "future-oriented" (Arlow, 2004: 285) approach that makes it easier to avoid contentious issues as McEvoy (2007) has warned. Teachers and students reproduce these notions of citizenship. Some students described citizens as 'hard-working,' 'having a job,' or referred to citizenship as something for people from more privileged backgrounds (see page 206), while teachers criticise citizenship education as too 'academic' with a focus on performance (see section "The focus on performance and teachers as performative workers").

In Israel, citizenship is a mandatory subject in the final examination and thus towards the end of high school. In both contexts, teachers are pressured to focus on concepts and topics that will be tested, leaving only a small amount of time for the discussion of controversial and current issues and to harness students' critical thinking. Hence, schools in Israel also reproduce the ethos of performance and individualism. These influences are particularly strong in the Arab-Palestinian school that sets a focus on individual educational success.

Whilst cultural reproduction dominates citizenship education in both societies, the data also shed light on pockets of resistance, which is expressed through students' redefinition

of mainstream citizenship education. The section 'Partial accounts of the conflict' (pages 145-160) discusses how Jewish-Israeli and Protestant students partly resisted the universal character of citizenship, denying the granting of the same rights to others (Arab-Palestinian or Catholic). In contrast, Arab-Palestinian and Catholic students to some extent emphasised these universal aspects of citizenship such as equality, democracy, and rights as the most important and connected them to their community's history of struggle and experiences of racism and sectarianism.

The latter is reminiscent of the literature on involuntary minorities in the United States, who tend to emphasise the importance of 'survival strategies' such as the struggle for civil rights to cope with the lack of opportunities, domination or even exploitation (Ogbu, 1990). Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that Catholics and Arab-Palestinians, which are involuntary minorities according to Ogbu's (1990) definition emphasise these aspects of citizenship. Similarly, hooks (1994) and Tillmann (2004) found that Black teachers in the United States (as involuntary minorities) carry with them personal experiences of racism and narratives that have historically been silenced and can provide counter-stories or counter-narratives. Ladson-Billings (1995) argued that the possession of culturally relevant knowledge helps minority teachers to deconstruct the dominant discourses and to develop a more critical approach to multiculturalism. Catholic and Arab-Palestinian teachers and students tend to have a better understanding of structural racism and sectarianism, arguably because they can connect it to the (historical) experiences of their communities. During the focus groups, Arab-Palestinians students de-constructed identities as political and demonstrated how they are exploited by power interests, by referring for example to the construction of Arabs as a security threat and discriminating policies. The major difference between Arab-Palestinians and the other students are that they are socialised into different perspectives and narratives: they are acquainted with 'the other' narrative in school, they learn Hebrew, consume Israeli media and culture and thus have more access to the reality of Jewish-Israelis (Al-Haj, 1995; Yiftachel, 1999), while at home they usually speak Arabic and learn about their family's and community's narrative about the conflict. In contrast to their counterparts from the other schools, this equips them with counter-knowledge and experiences to challenge the dominant

discourses and understandings of citizenship, whilst they are also socialised into these dominant discourses.

However, among all groups including (historical) minorities, there are tendencies to assimilate and reproduce cultural hegemony. This becomes evident through the reproduction of the managerialist culture and identity politics. Across all schools, students draw on strategic-essentialism (Spivak, 1988), mirroring dominant discourses from their communities that base demanding collective rights on the existence of a collective identity, narrative, and history of struggle. Some students embrace nationalism (or unionism among Protestants) and the 'culture of the gun' (see Bar-Tal and Halperin, 2013), viewing political violence as a legitimate part of their struggle.

However, there are differences among the communities regarding their power to claim collective rights. Compared to the other groups, Jewish-Israeli students were the most privileged in terms of collective rights and being able to identify with citizenship, captured well by the following statement "I do feel like my citizenship in Israel is quite my identity." (Focus group 1, Jewish-Israeli school). Protestant and Catholic communities are granted collective rights through citizenship in Northern Ireland (which was described in Chapter One) but suggested that their collective rights are limited. For example, some Protestant students referred to the flag protest as an example of how the rights of the Protestant community are restricted and some Catholic students mentioned the political goal to reunify with Ireland as an aspiration for self-determination. Since they are denied collective rights in Israel, Arab-Palestinian students adhere to individualist approaches to citizenship education, as previous research by Pinson and Agbaria (2015) and Agbaria (2016b) manifested.

The data demonstrated that citizenship education across all schools is shaped by the neoliberal/managerialist culture. In Northern Ireland, citizenship education generates a notion that citizenship is reserved for the more privileged in terms of class background, which leads working-class Protestant and Catholic students to reject citizenship as an 'elitist' concept. Again, this trend became most visible in the Arab-Palestinian school, where a liberal-individualist concept of citizenship is emphasised over republican or

communitarian concepts that are not offered to Arab-Palestinian citizens. Obgu (1990) found a similar inclination among involuntary minority groups in the United States, which emphasise success through education and the belief in individual effort and hard work to overcome obstacles (Ogbu, 1990). These tendencies might explain why the Catholic and Arab-Palestinian school (which are involuntary minorities according to Ogbu's (1990) definition) emphasise an ethos of social mobility. Hence, Catholic, Protestant, and Arab-Palestinian students understand citizenship primarily as an individualist concept, which does not necessarily confirm their collective rights.

Banks (2008) phrased collective rights as cultural rights of minorities and demanded that minority's identities, languages, experiences, and narratives must be included in the curriculum, which is usually dominated by the majority group's culture. These cultural rights affirm culturally relevant pedagogy that incorporates and is responsive to students' home cultures (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The data suggest that when these cultural rights are absent (as in the case of the Catholic, Protestant (to some extent) and in the Arab-Palestinian school), schools, teachers and students tend to adhere to individualist concepts of citizenship, whereas learning about one's culture, narratives, and experiences takes place mainly in the realm of families and communities.

### HOW CAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION CONTRIBUTE TO CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION?

Related to the previous research question it becomes evident that collective or group rights can play an important role in challenging cultural hegemony by including different identities and cultures. However, whilst the granting of group rights is an important step towards a more equal and inclusive society, they are insufficient in contributing towards (conflict) transformation. In response to the final research question, citizenship education needs to adhere to cultural rights of minorities (or all groups in society), but further, promote critical pedagogy to foster conflict transformation. Ladson-Billings raised a similar argument in her definition of culturally relevant pedagogy, which "helps students

to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetrate." (1995:469).

The previous two sections indicated that the potential of citizenship education in Northern Ireland and Israel to foster critical political thinking is limited. Davies (2015) argued that there is a danger in peace education that circumvents addressing political and structural causes of the conflict. She warns that it can be complicit in normalising past or on-going violence and this study demonstrated that it can 'normalise' racism and sectarianism.

Yet, the findings also indicated that citizenship education has potential to conduce conflict transformation. In Chapter two, Lederach's (2014) approach to conflict transformation was presented and it was argued that a long-term approach is required to address the context and relationship patterns of the conflict and that escalation to a certain degree might be necessary for constructive change (Lederach, 2014). Davies (2004) pinned this further down, explaining that in conflict-affected societies, education requires exposure to conflict. Both refer to the encounter with opposing views and narratives from 'the other side', which is reminiscent of Banks (2008), who demands the inclusion of cultural rights and the emphasis on dialogue and discussion as aspects of democratic education (Dewey, 1964) and empowerment (Freire, 1970).

The encounter with opposing or alternative views is necessary to develop a degree of political generosity. As mentioned earlier in Chapter two, the term 'political generosity' has been coined among others by Emerson (2012; see also McEvoy et al., 2006) as "the ability to legitimise the cultural and political identity of those with opposing views" (2012:290), which she based on the condition of having confidence in one's own cultural and political identity and the right of others to hold these views. Knowledge and confrontation with other perspectives, narratives about the conflict and other political identities can enhance the capacity for political generosity (Emerson, 2012).

However, drawing on critical pedagogy and the work of post-colonial theorists, 'true' generosity in opposition to "false generosity" (Freire, 1970:45) further requires readiness for criticality and specifically self-criticality by those who dominate/the colonizers/the powerful or the majority. While learning about one's cultural and political identity can be

empowering for those to whom it is denied (Banks, 2004), this needs to include the development of a critical consciousness among all groups. Following critical educators and post-colonialists (Fanon, 2008/1952; Freire, 1970; Hall, 2000; Ladson- Billings, 1996; 2004; Said, 1978), a critical consciousness includes the ability to de-essentialise identities, locating them in the context of power relations. Since there is usually an asymmetry in terms of whose identity or culture dominates, claiming to represent the 'universal' as Laclau framed it, there is a need to examine this asymmetry critically. This requires all groups, but the dominant group particularly, to be critical towards the identity constructions that are part of the 'self', exercising 'self-criticality' towards how one's own national, cultural, religious or ethnic identities are exploited for political and economic interests. A critical consciousness exposes how essentialised identities draw on racist and sectarian ideologies that seek to sustain and 'legitimise' privilege and oppression. As mentioned earlier, Banks (1994) and Jenks et al. (2001) claimed that the development of cross-cultural competency involves "the critical examination of one's own beliefs and values regarding culture, race, and social class; and an understanding of how knowledge, beliefs, and values determine one's behaviour with respect to minority groups." (Jenks et al., 2001:88). Self-criticality is central to political generosity since it illuminates privilege and oppression. Arguably, self-criticality is challenging in particular on part of privileged groups, as it requires questioning and de-constructing one's own privileges and the beneficial status quo that secures the system of advantage, partly through racism and sectarianism. This idea of confronting privilege and power relations by examining the selectivity of our vision and emotional attention is also promoted by the concept of 'pedagogy of discomfort' (Boler, 1999; Boler and Zembylas, 2003). The pedagogy of discomfort assumes that feelings of discomfort are an important aspect of challenging dominant structures, beliefs, and practice; as part of learning about the experiences of victims of injustice, and finally as providing potential for transformation (Boler, 1999; Zembylas, 2015).

The potential for these processes of self-criticality and political generosity was also reflected in the data. Arab-Palestinian students have demonstrated their capacity for critical political thinking since they are aware of the hegemonic discourse and how it

structures privilege and oppression in their society. Additionally, working-class Protestant and Catholic students partly dismantle citizenship education as something elitist, reflecting the gap between different socio-economic groups in Northern Ireland and how the peace process has disillusioned their communities. This is particularly true for young Protestants as the data reflected, while young Catholics still might feel a sense of empowerment when offered the space in their citizenship class to share their narratives and negotiate their Catholic identity.

Banks' (2008) claimed that students need to have extensive knowledge about their own and others' cultures and identities to understand how they become politicised and structure societies. Among the young participants, only Arab-Palestinian students demonstrated self-criticality and political generosity. This seems to stem from the fact that they are the only group that learns about different perspectives on the conflict: they are socialised into their community's narratives at home whilst they are required to learn about the dominant Jewish-Israeli narrative in school. This equips them with a broader understanding of the conflict and knowledge about the 'other' group that allows them to understand their perspectives, demands, and actions.

To humanize not only oneself but also the (former) enemy is a central aspect of conflict transformation (Bar-Tal and Rosen, 2009). Being confronted with different perspectives in controversial issues discussions and challenging the hegemony might lead to more (verbal) conflict, but as Lederach (2014) maintained, sometimes conflict might be necessary for constructive change. Closing the circle, such an educational approach responds to the demands by post-colonial theorists for the critical examination of dominant cultures and narratives and frames identities as fluid products of their political and historical context (Hall, 2000).

As a final note, this study has demonstrated that while citizenship for empowerment and transformation is possible at the margins or outside of the classroom, there tends to be a lack of political support for this form of citizenship education. It needs to be underpinned by 'true' political generosity and political literacy, infused with critical pedagogy to provide students and teachers with the space and time in the education system to practice

citizenship for empowerment. Moreover, drawing on Giroux (1980), active approaches to citizenship education as outlined in this section, ironically encourage a critical examination of what it means to be a citizenship in a dominant social order and thus encourages the questioning of citizenship education itself; of how it is taught and the political interests sustaining it.

Yet, it is unlikely for empowering citizenship education to emerge if this is against the interests of the political and economic elites. In its current state, citizenship education does not only distract from dealing with political conflict, the data suggest that it even perpetuates the conflict. This confirms to some extent Davies' (2004) claim that schools in conflict-affected societies are at risk of nourishing a culture of fear, nationalism, and obedience (or conformity), instead of empowering young people as transformative citizens (Banks, 2008). This is facilitated through censor mechanisms and a level of ambiguity in the policy text that places an excessive burden on teachers. Banks (2015) even labelled political alienation, ambivalent national identities, feeling structurally excluded and politically separate among minorities as a form of "failed citizenship" (p.152).

Therefore, there is a need for the reconstruction of citizenship education at all levels, from the policy and school to the classroom level. The findings of the thesis support the demands of other critical educators (Banks, 1994; 2015; Boler and Zembylas, 2003; Emerson, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995), suggesting that a reconstruction of citizenship education must entail: first, culturally relevant pedagogy that allows young people to engage with and develop overlapping identities (including local, national and global identities among others), cultures, and narratives, especially those that tend to be silenced in dominant discourses. Second, it requires the promotion of political generosity combined with a form of self-criticality that critically examines identities and how they underpin structures of privilege and oppression. Finally, a pedagogy of discomfort is important to address the emotional dimension of avoidance and can challenge benign approaches to multiculturalism and liberalism. In this way, citizenship education can emerge as a counter-hegemonic practice.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited mainly by the theoretical framework, methodological choices, and practicalities that have affected the fieldwork and analysis. Firstly, the research is restricted by the researcher values, referring to the researcher's personal characteristics or behaviour that influenced the data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Onwuegbuzie and McLean, 2003). In addition to this personal lens that is shaped by my background, the research is directed by the theoretical framework of (neo)-Marxism and postcolonialism. Whilst a different theoretical framework would have perhaps focused on different aspects and even highlighted different findings, choosing this framework directed the research to focus on power relations and structures. To reveal this positioning, I discussed the researcher bias in detail in the Methodology Chapter to allow the reader to look at the findings against this background and framework.

While the critical theoretical framework has helped to illuminate power relations and hidden ideologies that underpin citizenship education, it also has its drawbacks. It has been argued that critical theory and specifically critical pedagogy lack a normative base (Nichols and Allen-Brown, 1996; Alexander, 2018), draw on dense language and are difficult to access by those coming from an oppressed viewpoint (Nichols and Allen-Brown, 1996), deal with social justice issues on a high level of abstraction instead of offering strategies and solutions (Nichols and Allen-Brown, 1996; Bowers, 1993; Elsworth, 1989), and that their apparent universalism has been traditionally dominated by the voices of the privileged (usually male, middle-class and white) (Burbulus and Berk, 1999; Elsworth, 1989). Elsworth (1989) demanded that critical pedagogy needs to confront the question whose voices it silences for example in the classroom practice, where power dimensions between teacher and students and between the students might prevent the creation of a safe space to discuss issues of social justice and experiences of discrimination.

The major problematic inherent in different approaches to critical pedagogy lies in the question of where it will lead to after the empowerment of marginalized and oppressed groups. Gur Ze'ev (1998) has elaborated on this, attacking different approaches to critical

pedagogy (by Freire, Giroux, McLaren) for their positive utopianism and the fact that they tend to normalize educational violence. For example, he proposes that Freire's claim of the self-evidence of the oppressed's knowledge is dangerous and even has "terroristic potential" (p.467) and oversees the individual's struggle for autonomy. Instead, he argues that counter-education should commit itself to negate all forms of educational violence and power games, whether fascist, Marxist or capitalist. This argument is also part of the idea of strategic essentialism (Spivak, 1988), outlined earlier and which also became visible in the discussion of the data where Arab-Palestinian and Catholic students essentialized "the other" or claim superiority by drawing on their narratives of oppression. Therefore, these remaining questions and contradictions inherent in critical pedagogy require further theoretical refinement, which has limited the contribution of this thesis.

Secondly, the research is limited mainly by the time frame, available resources and the abilities of the researcher. The intention at the beginning of the doctoral research project was to look at all different school types in both societies, which would include integrated schools in Northern Ireland and bilingual schools in Israel, but this was later reconsidered because it would go beyond the time frame of the PhD.

Moreover, I am aware that the chosen schools represent an incomplete picture of these societies and a rather simplistic account of the conflicts that are more complex as they involve more actors than the two largest identity groups in each society. As mentioned earlier in the methodology section, the partly pragmatic selection of the schools due to constraints regarding time, resources, and access has impacted on the findings. The fact that the students in Israel tended to come from a middle-class background, while the school population in Northern Ireland was predominantly working-class, has brought the role of class further to the fore in the context of Northern Ireland. Moreover, the circumstance that the Arab-Palestinian school is private with a majority of Christian students also has the consequence that some perspectives are missing or are underrepresented (such as perspectives form Muslim, Bedouin or Druze students). To provide a complete account of citizenship education in Northern Ireland and Israel, in addition to the integrated/bilingual schools, I would have to include selective schools, schools with a majority of Muslim students, (Jewish) religious schools, urban and rural

schools. However, including these different schools and groups would have gone beyond the timeframe of this PhD research and could provide a base for future research projects.

Related to this, another compromise was the choice of depth over generalisation. The methodological choice of conducting a qualitative research project and drawing on a comparative case study approach limits the generalisations of the findings. Since the goal of the research was to examine the current state of citizenship education in the context of these four schools, it prioritised analytical depth over statistical generalisation. Therefore, the findings are to be interpreted against their specific settings and cannot be generalised across other conflict-affected societies, even though similar issues might occur in these contexts.

Finally, my limited knowledge of Arabic and Hebrew has certainly impacted on the communication with participants in Israel. Despite the participants' impressive fluency in English, a researcher who is fluent in these two languages might have gained a clearer insight into the descriptions by the participants. As it was already discussed in the Methodology Chapter, proficiency in English became unwillingly a selection criterion for participants. It was also difficult for me to follow the observations of citizenship lessons, where I relied on translations by the students. Moreover, a better knowledge of Hebrew would have helped to conduct a more detailed study of the documents from the education authorities, schools, and teachers. While I gained a glimpse from these documents about the state of citizenship education, a more thorough study of these documents with the help of a translator would have been valuable. Yet, as discussed earlier in the Methodology Chapter, including a translator requires to take into account the translator's cultural baggage as well since they are also not 'neutral' as interpreters (Temple and Edwards, 2002). Therefore, these limitations are mainly the result of choosing to engage directly with the participants over drawing on the help by (professional) translators.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The thesis has raised two central issues: firstly, the data suggest that there is a pressing need in conflict-affected societies and arguably in all societies with a violent or troubled history to address the past critically and from various perspectives, especially from those that have been silenced. Secondly, I asked earlier (page 75) whether there is a way to create a form of citizenship education that is generous to the multiplicity of identities without making them redundant in their struggle for justice.

Regarding the first issue, I started to write this conclusion on the day of the elections for the German federal parliament, where for the first time after the Second World War, a right-wing extremist party gained enough votes to enter the parliament. Some of its members deny the crimes committed under the Nazi regime and appeal to strengthen German patriotism and nationalism as well as to abandon what they call 'the culture of guilt', which they claim dominates the consciousness of German citizens (see for example Am Orde, 2017; Appenzeller, 2017). Sadly, their success is reminiscent that history of conflict can repeat itself if we do not deal with our past seriously. It demonstrates the danger of silencing the past and of essentialising identities and cultures that legitimise racism, anti-Semitism, and sectarianism.

In Northern Ireland and Israel, there is a need to re-assess the past, to hold political elites responsible for the crimes committed, perhaps in the style of a truth commission. Shriver (1995) argued that forgiveness can only happen after a form of what he calls "moral truth" (p.9) has been established, in a sense of a more accurate picture of history, representing different perspectives and narratives. While history and memory are often selective, there is a need to account for these events, to name victims and perpetrators. Whilst we can forgive the perpetrators by deconstructing how they themselves are also the 'victims' of hegemonic ideologies, we cannot and shall not forget, as one Arab-Palestinian student framed it during the interview. Young people and societies, in general, need to be confronted with different perspectives of the past and structural explanations to examine the complex picture of political conflicts.

However, across both societies, there seems to be a lack of political will to seriously engage with these issues that require political support to not lead to avoidance and censoring. Like previous research (Agbaria, 2016b; Gilborn, 2016), this study has demonstrated that citizenship education is permeated by cultural hegemony expressed through neoliberal and identity politics that impede the development of critical political thinking. It is only likely that critical and transformative citizenship education will develop under political and economic elites that support critical pedagogies. At the moment, it seems that such a political change is unlikely to happen; on the contrary, the entrance of right-wing parties into parliament in many European countries, the Brexit, the election of Donald Trump as President and the continuous shift to the political right in Israel are all indicators of a move towards more nationalistic and authoritarian understandings of citizenship that function alongside the dominance of neoliberalism.

Yet, related to the second issue there is a potential for transformative citizenship among minority groups, nourished through communities (even if not always in a critical manner) and through the efforts of individual (critical) teachers and principals. This might also point to directions for future research. Exploring the pedagogies of critical teachers who are able to promote transformative citizenship even in an uncongenial political environment that subtly promotes avoidance and censoring could be an insightful future project. Additionally, whereas most studies on citizenship education focus on the school context, the findings point at the influence of families, peers, the media and organisations outside of schools on students' understandings of citizenship and identity. Therefore, another future project could be the investigation of how young people conceptualise and practice citizenship outside of the official education system.

As a final note, the findings of this thesis are reminiscent of Bush and Saltarelli's (2000) claim that education can be both a constructive and destructive force in conflict-affected societies and beyond. While structural change is the central requirement for constructive education, currently the burden is still placed on individual educators and learners to create empowering and transformative education on the small scale, becoming their own masters and mistresses of their identities as Kwame Anthony Appiah formulated it.

# APPENDIX

## DRAWINGS FROM THE FOCUS GROUPS

### PROTESTANT SCHOOL

**FIGURE 2 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 1_1, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**

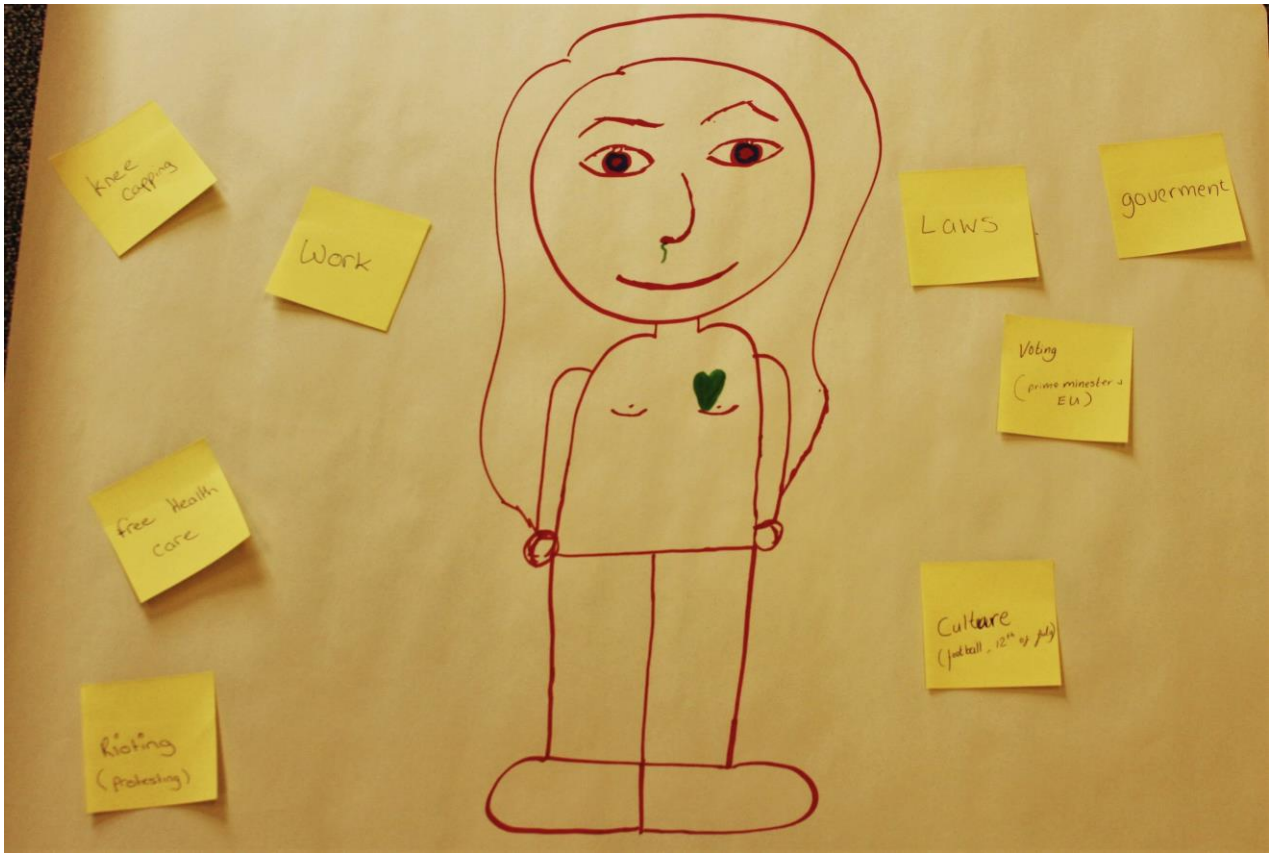


**FIGURE 3 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 1_2, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**

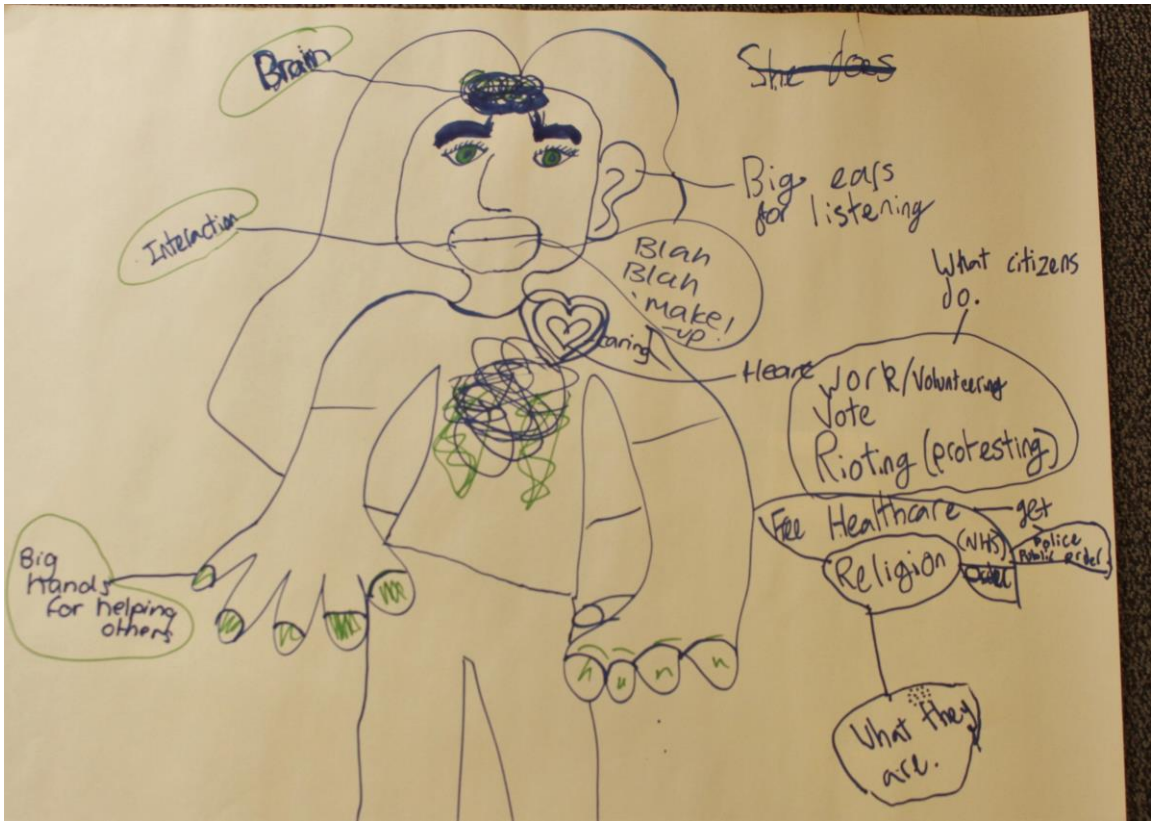


**FIGURE 4 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 2, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**

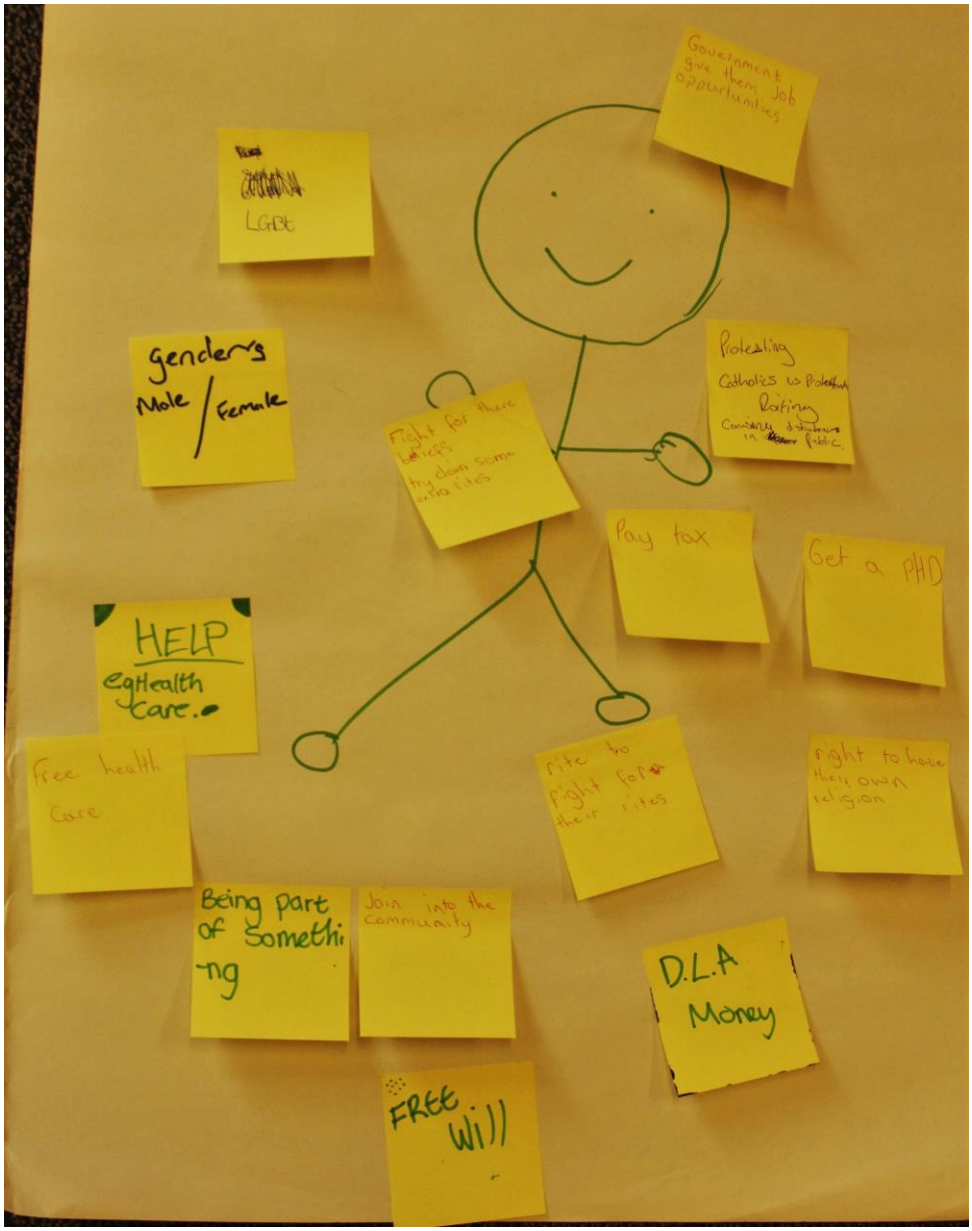


**FIGURE 5 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 3, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**

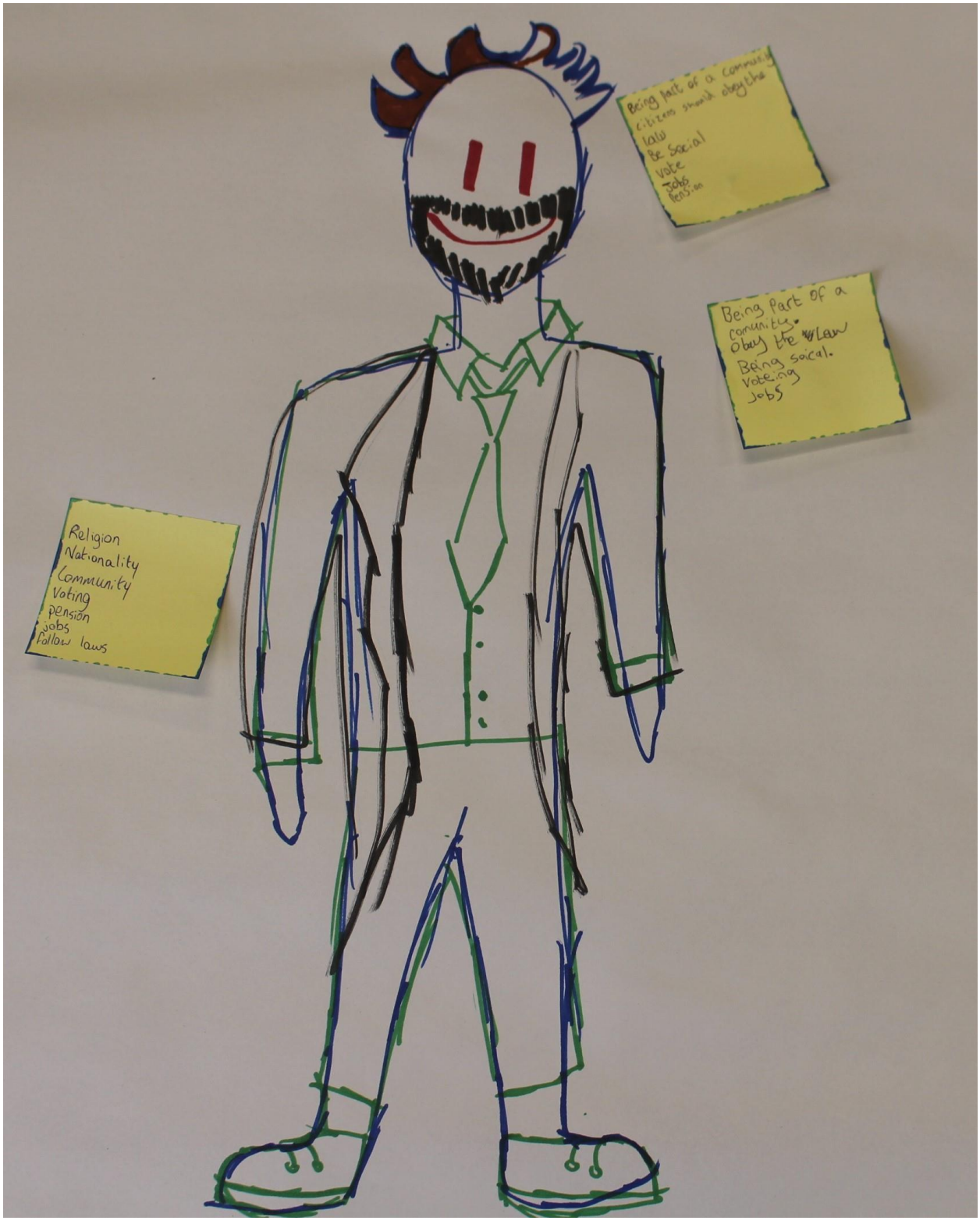


**FIGURE 6 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 4, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**

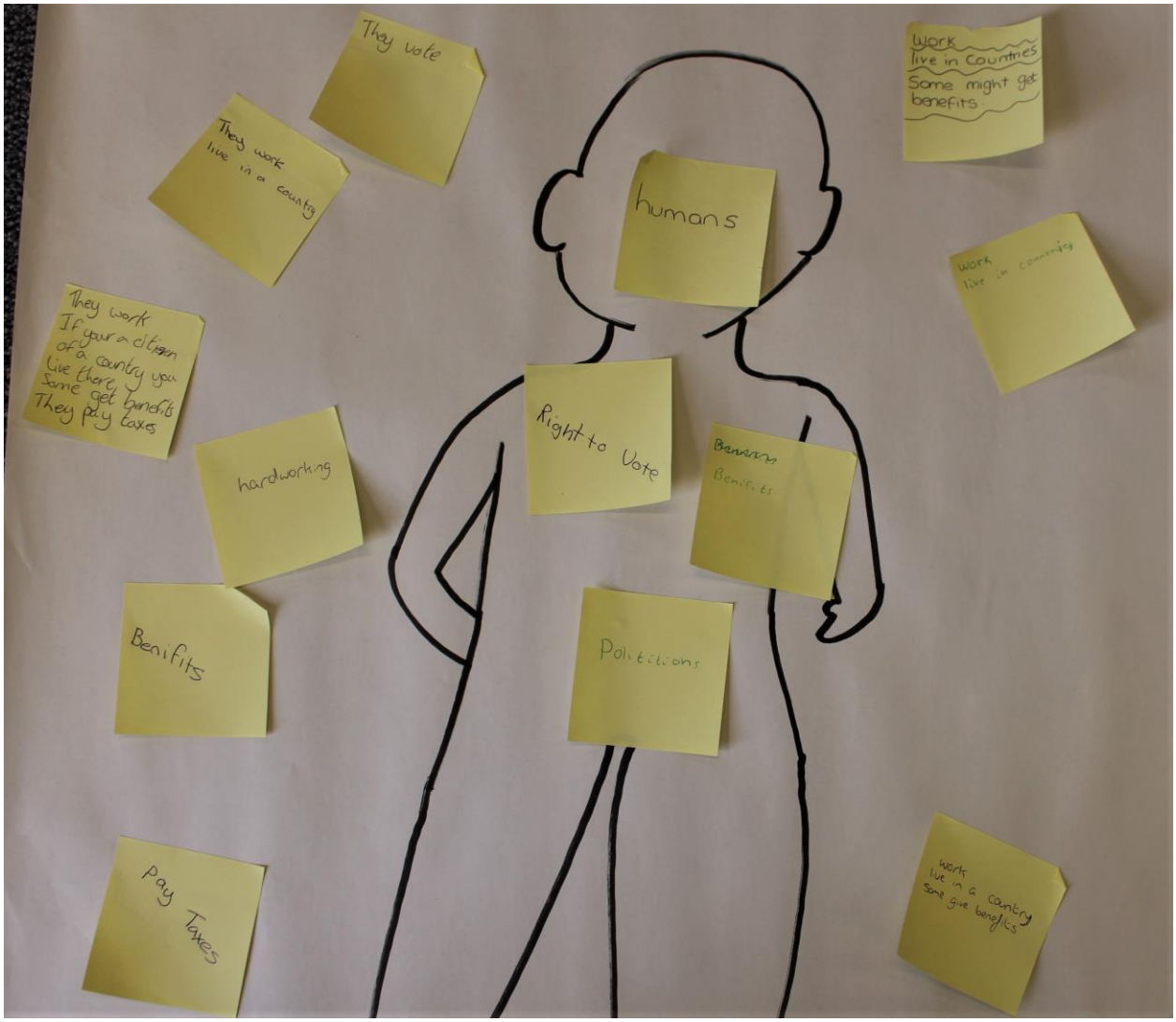


**FIGURE 7 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 1, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**

**FIGURE 8 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 2, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**

**FIGURE 9 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 3, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**

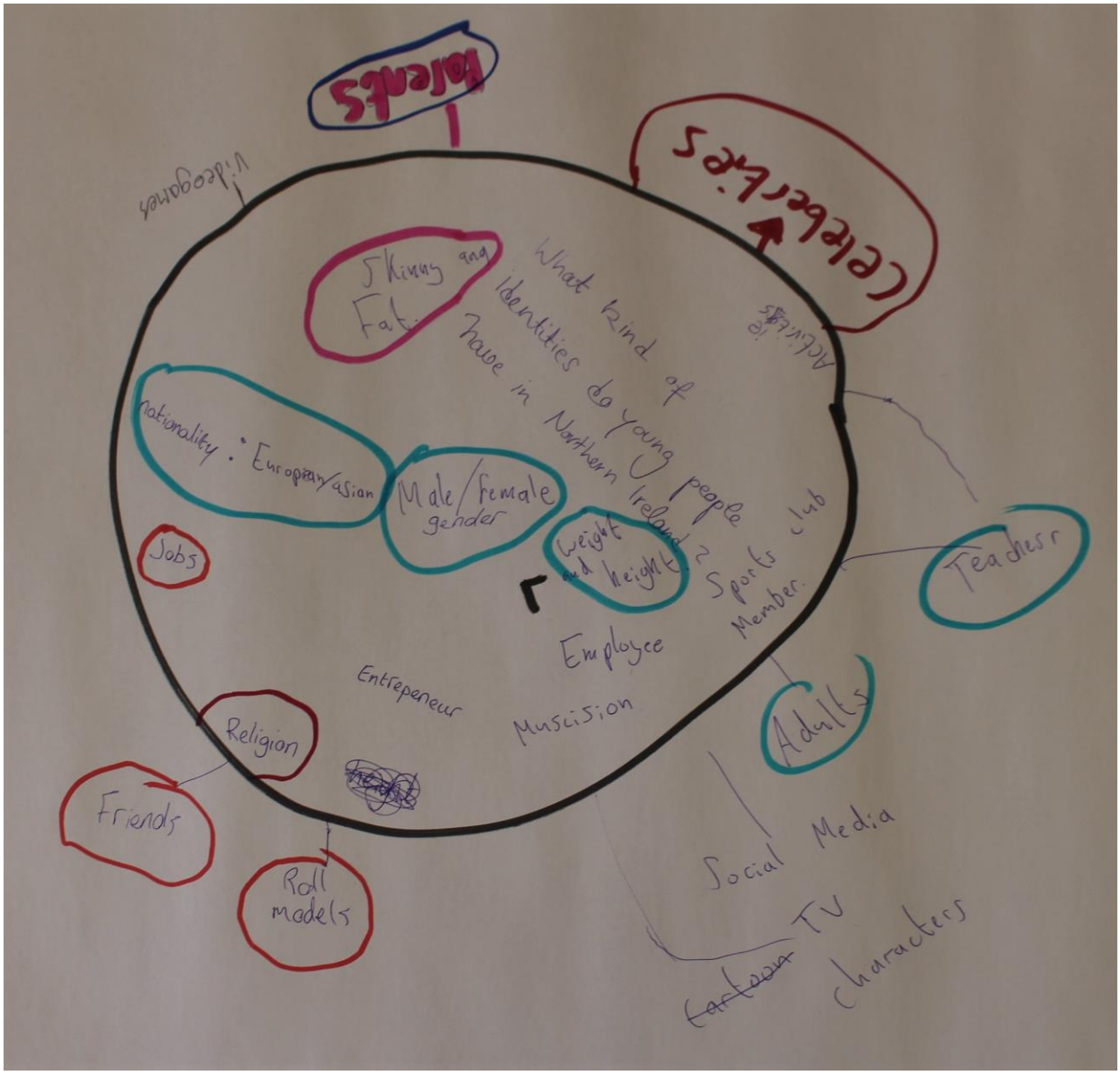
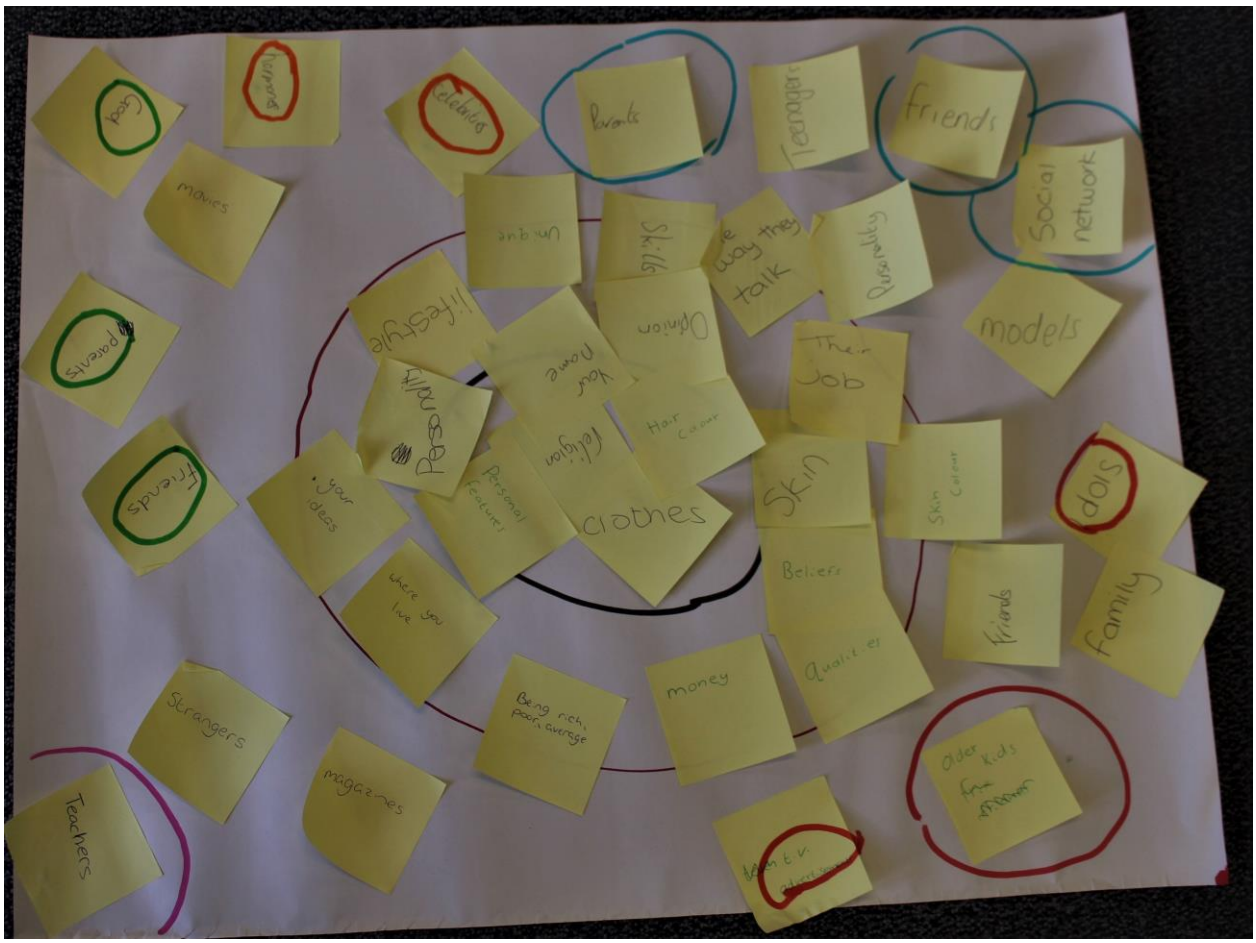


**FIGURE 10 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 4, PROTESTANT SCHOOL**



CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**FIGURE 11 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 1, CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**FIGURE 12 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 2, CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

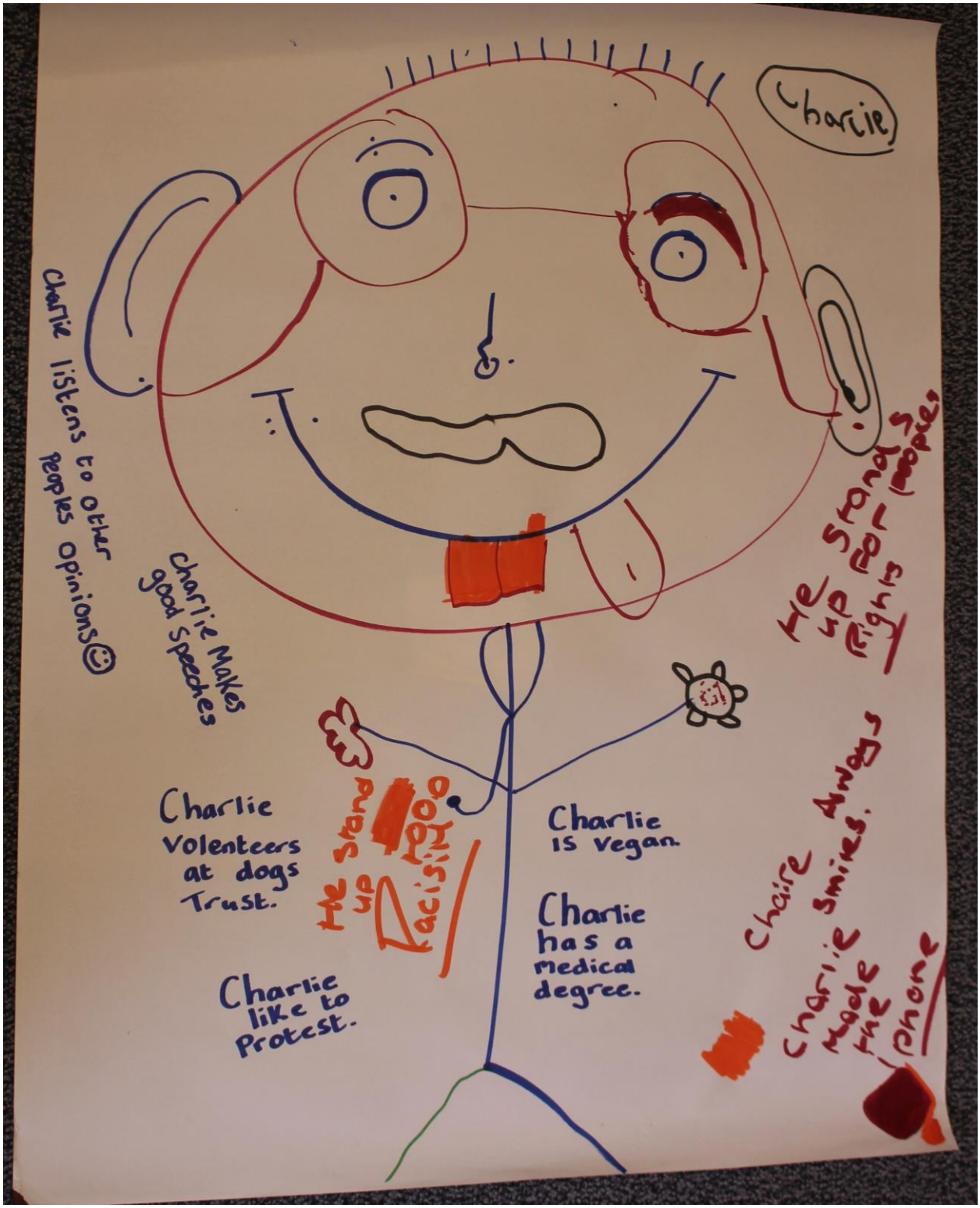


**FIGURE 13 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 3, CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

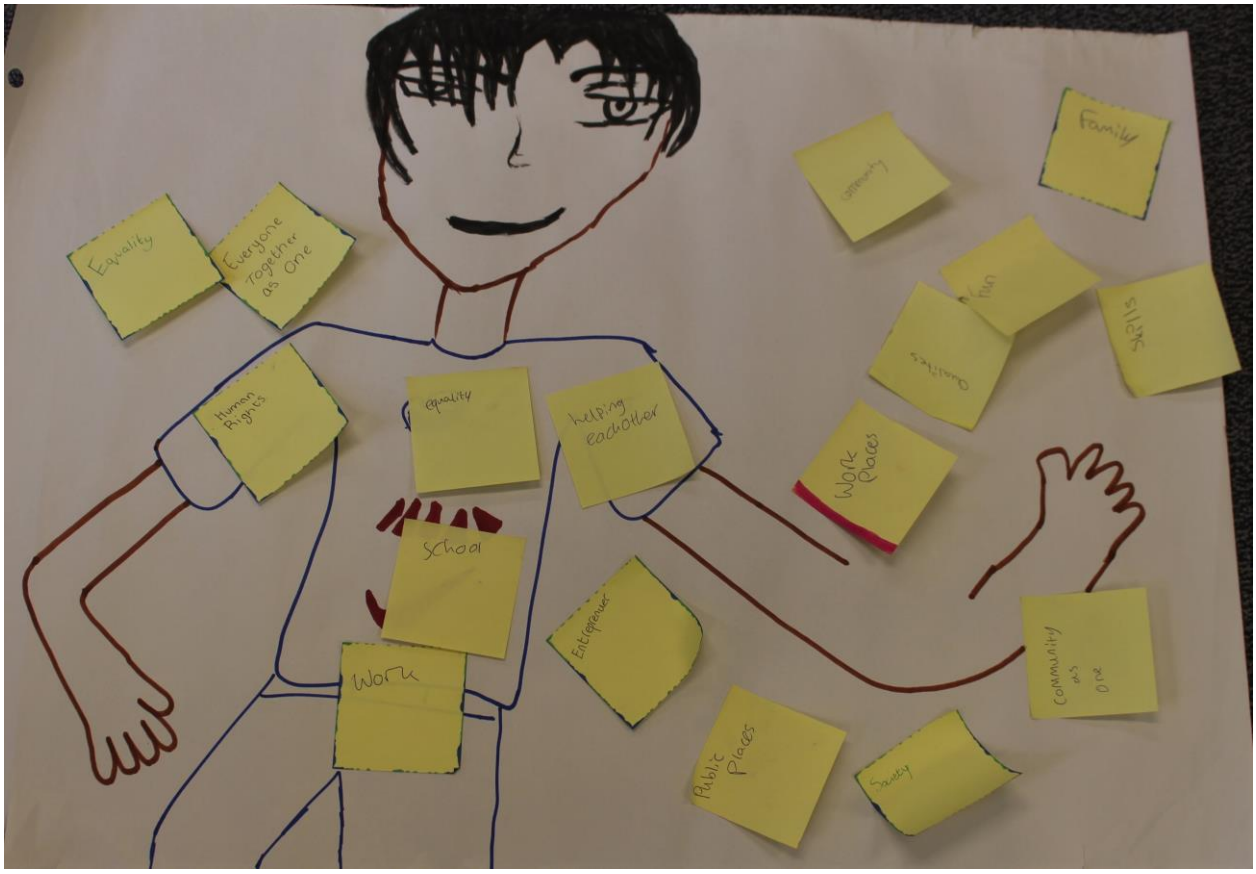


**FIGURE 14 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 4, CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

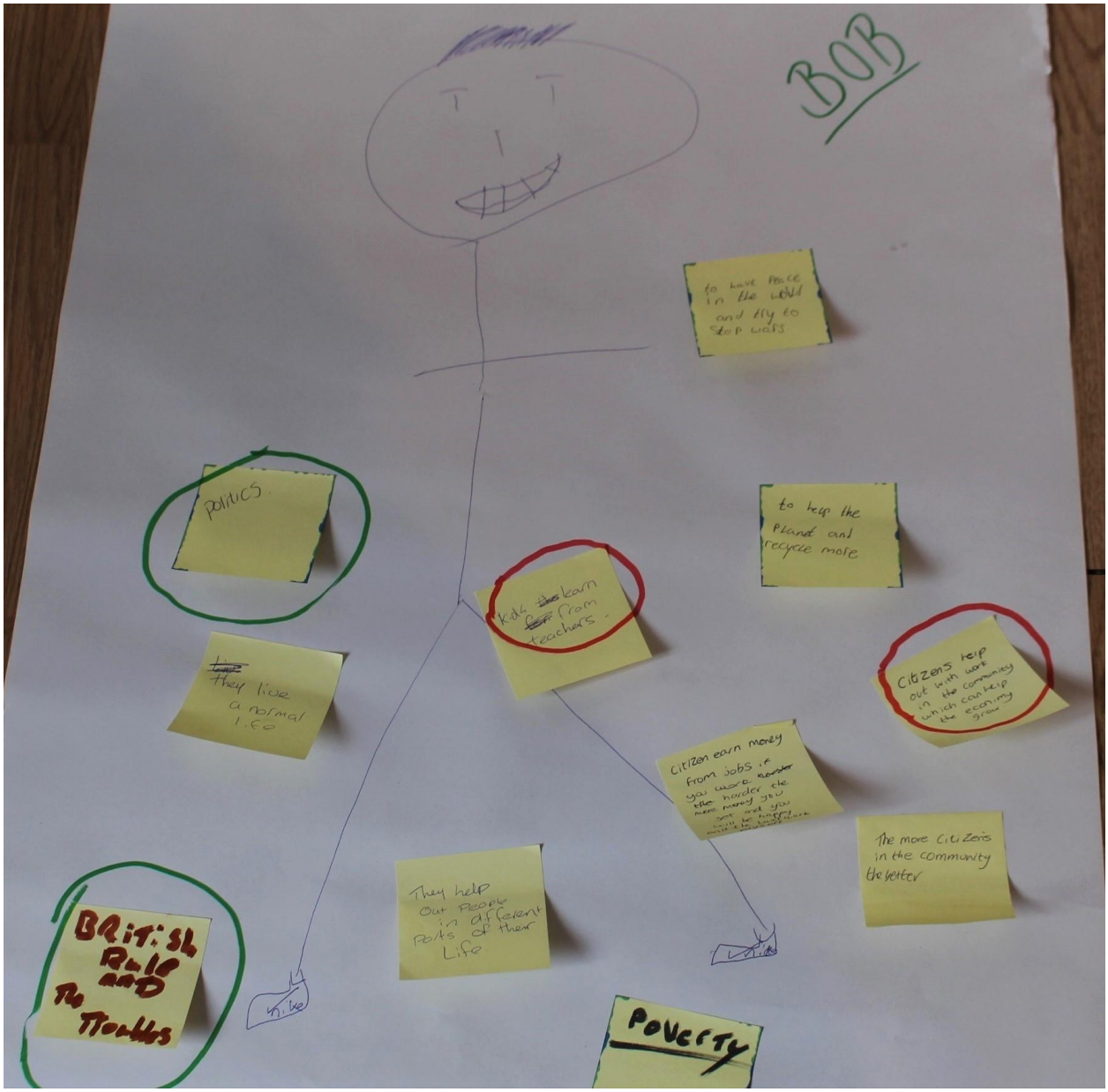


**FIGURE 15 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 1, CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

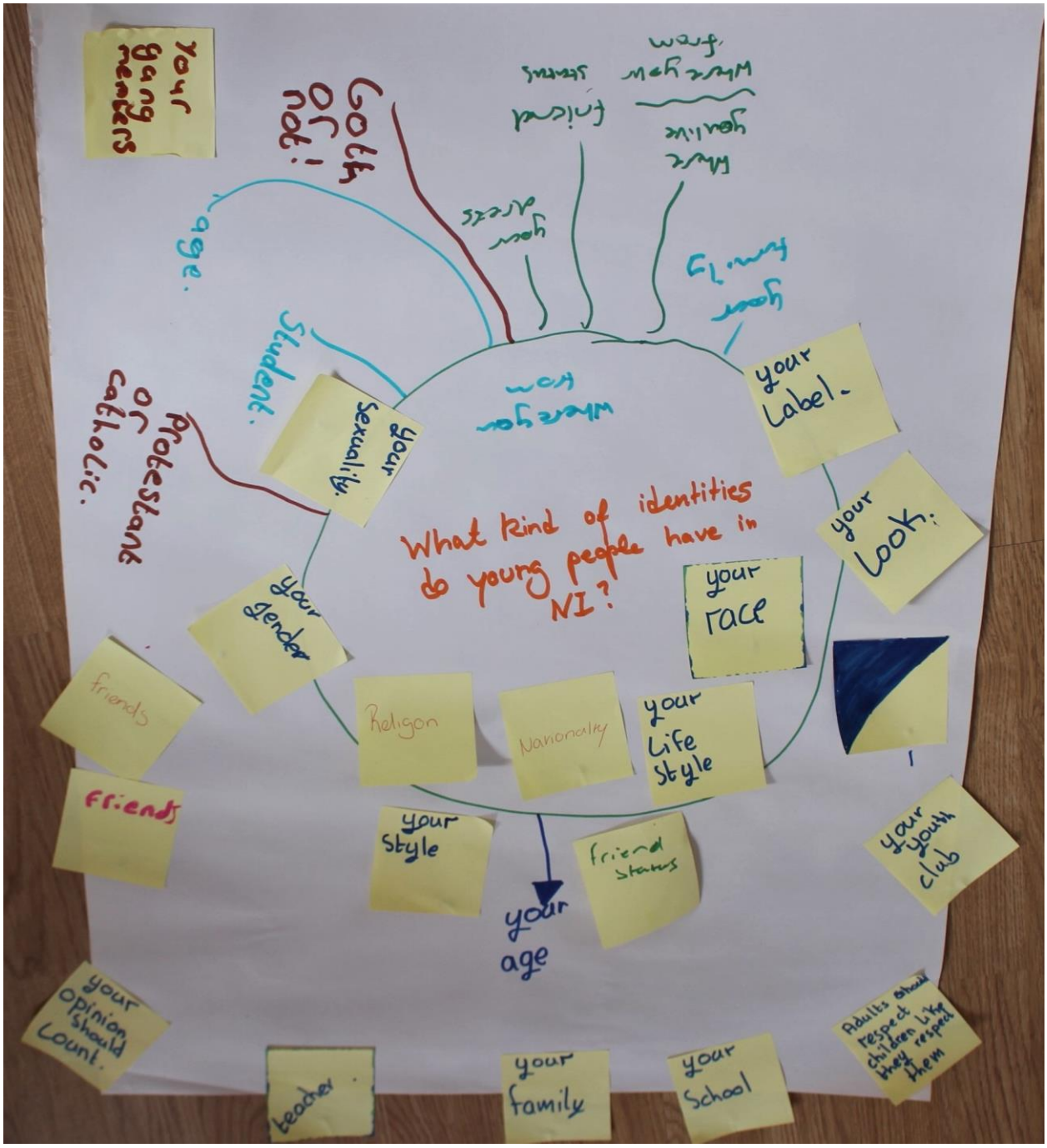


**FIGURE 16 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 2, CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

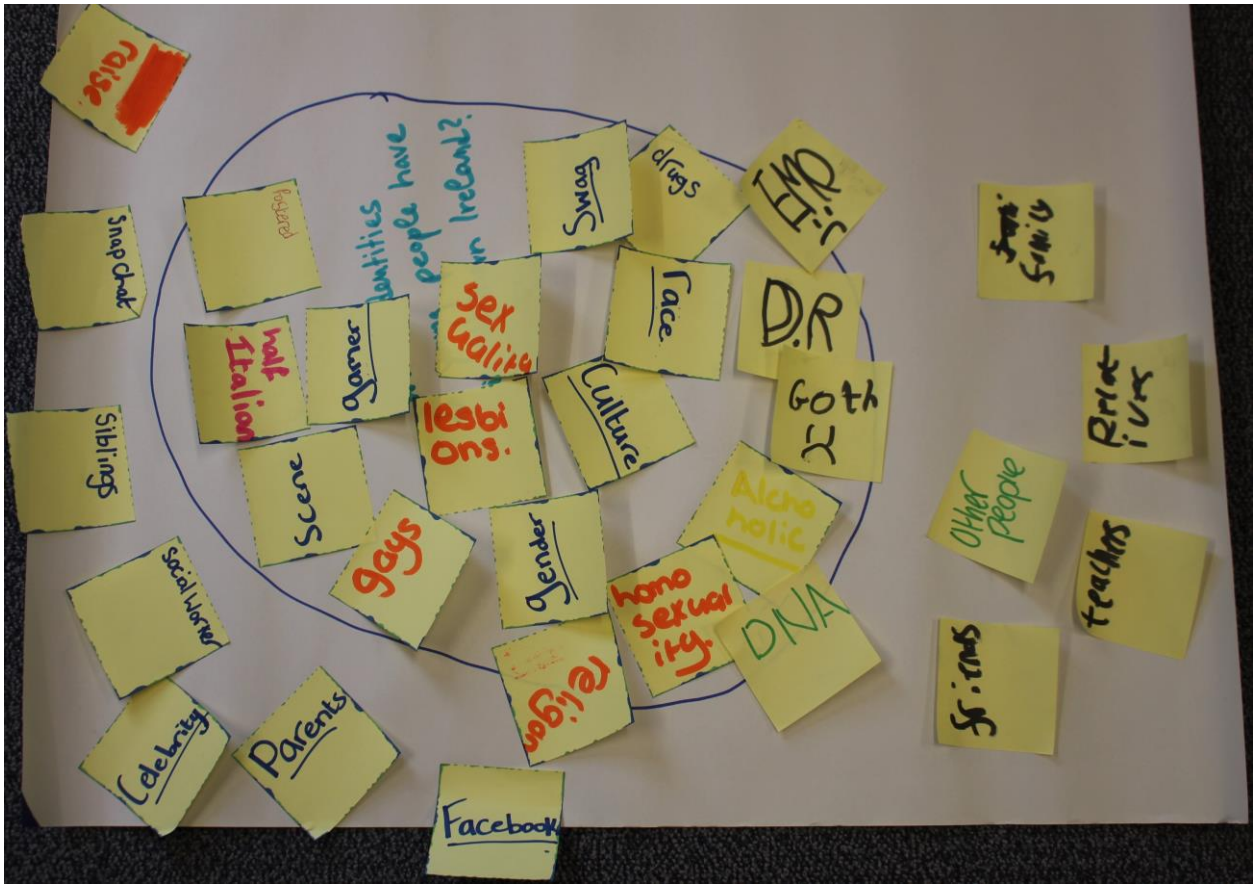


**FIGURE 17 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 3, CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**FIGURE 18 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 4, CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL

**FIGURE 19 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 1, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL**

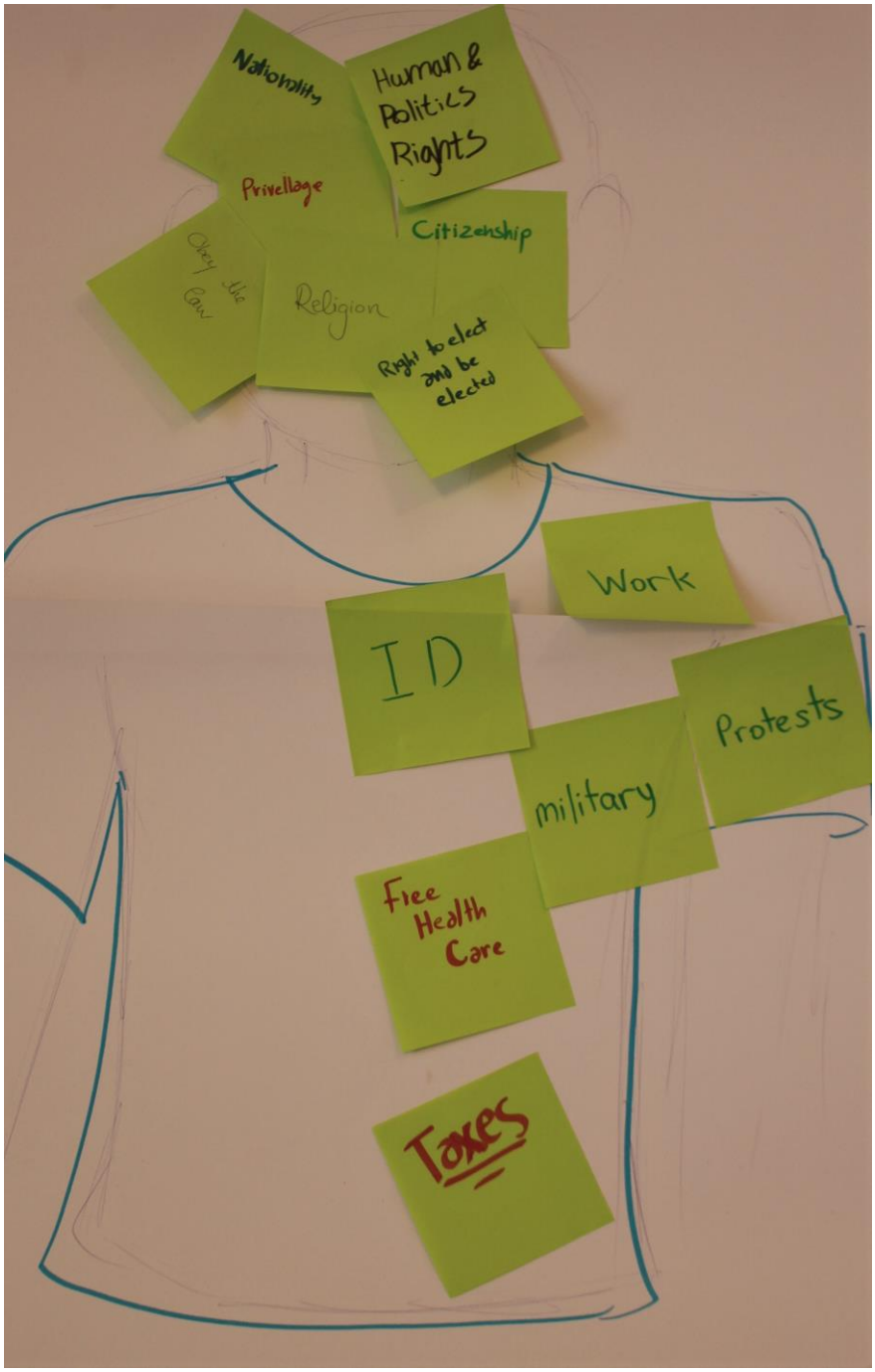


**FIGURE 20 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 2, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL**

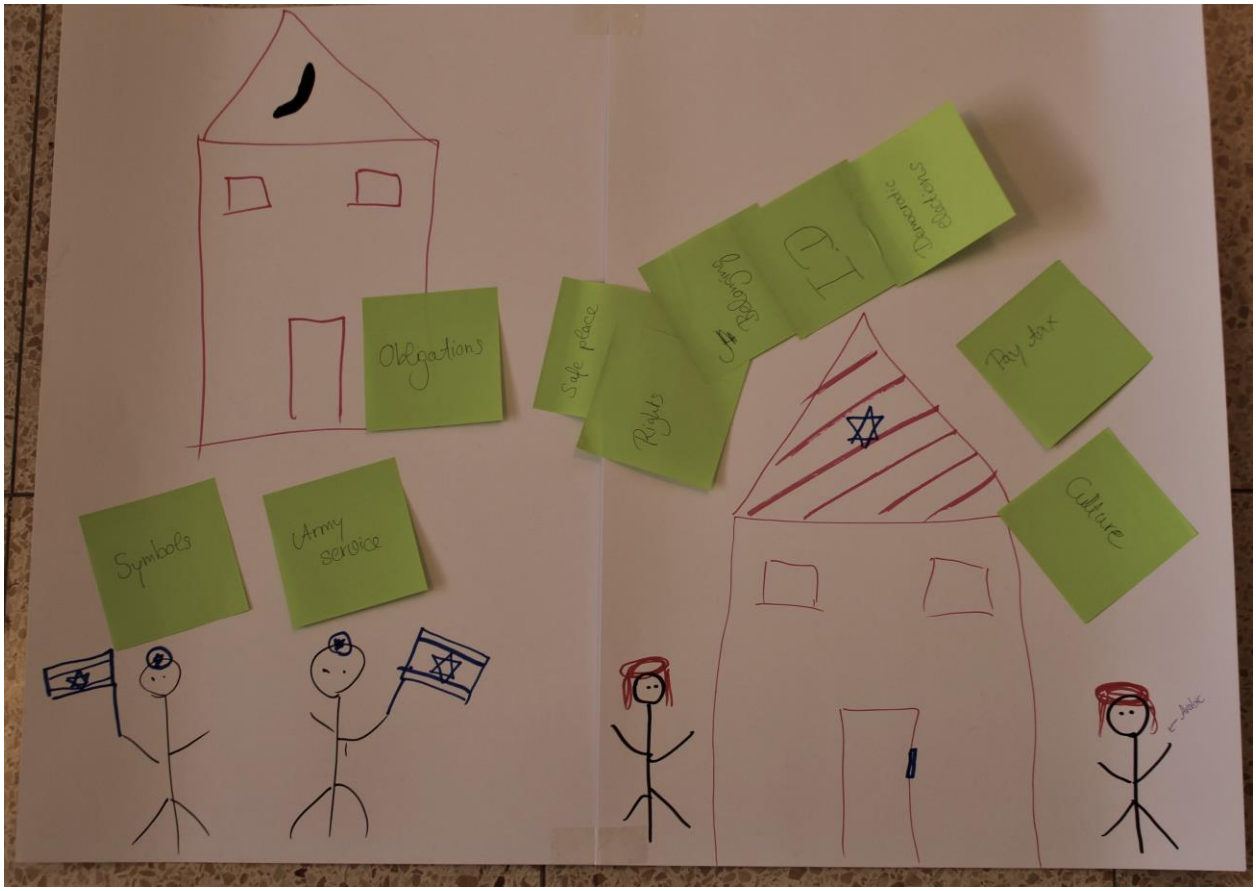


**FIGURE 21 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 3_1, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL, YEAR 9**

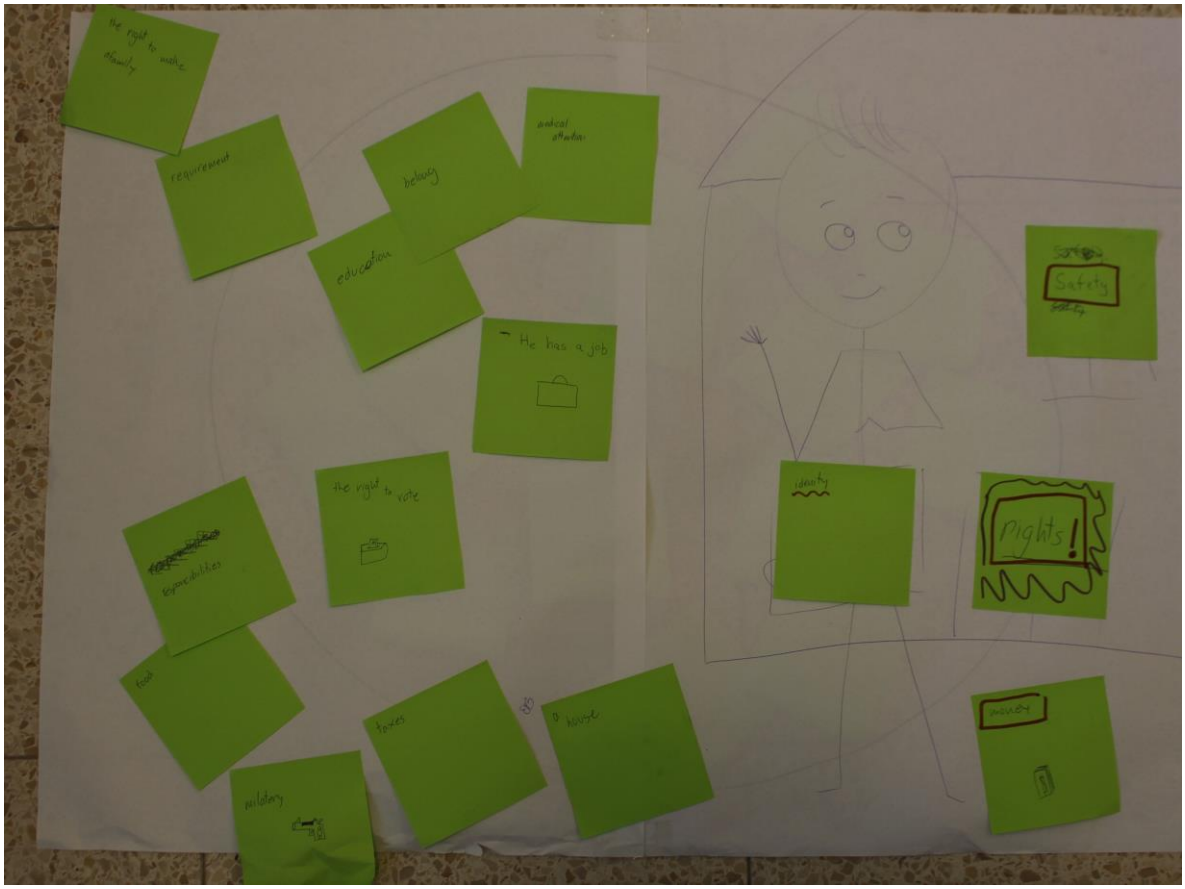


**FIGURE 22 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 3_2, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL, YEAR 9**

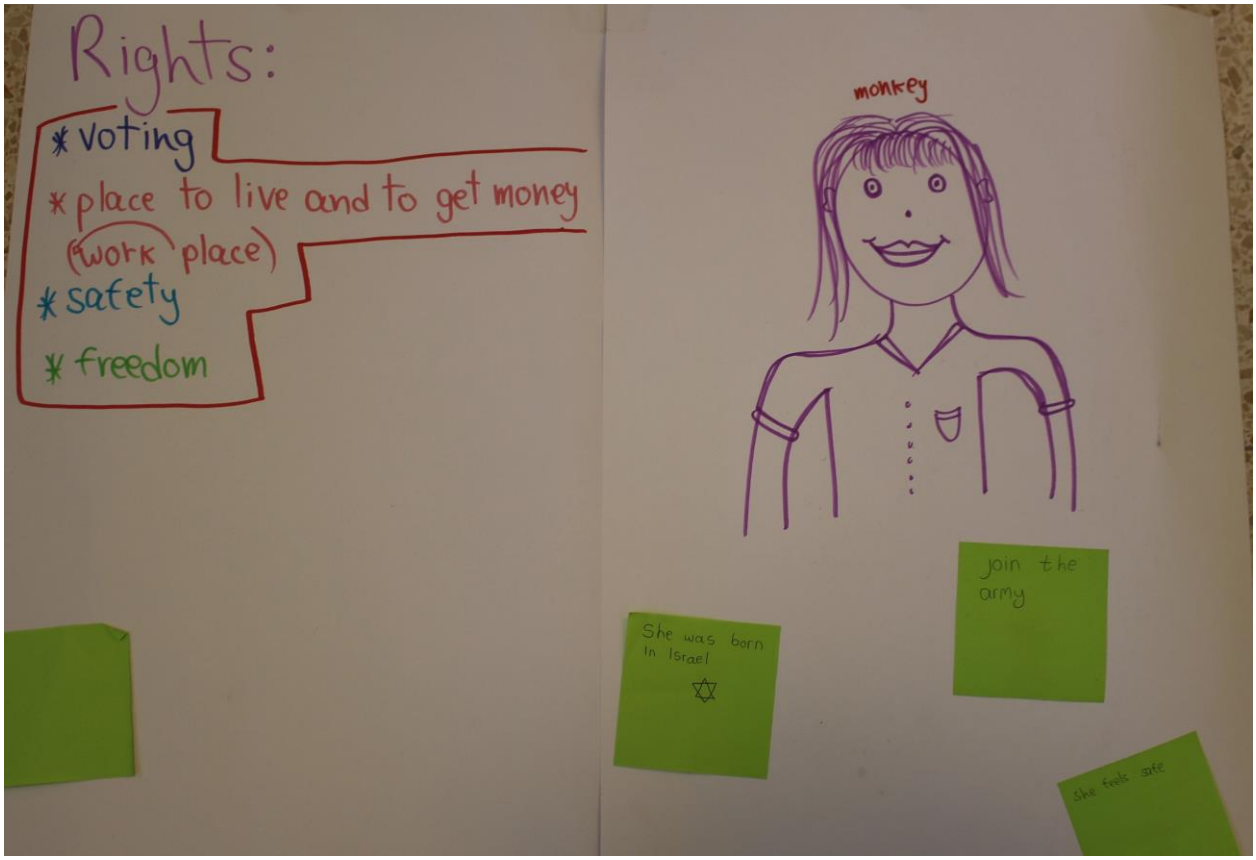


**FIGURE 23 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 4_1, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL, YEAR 9**

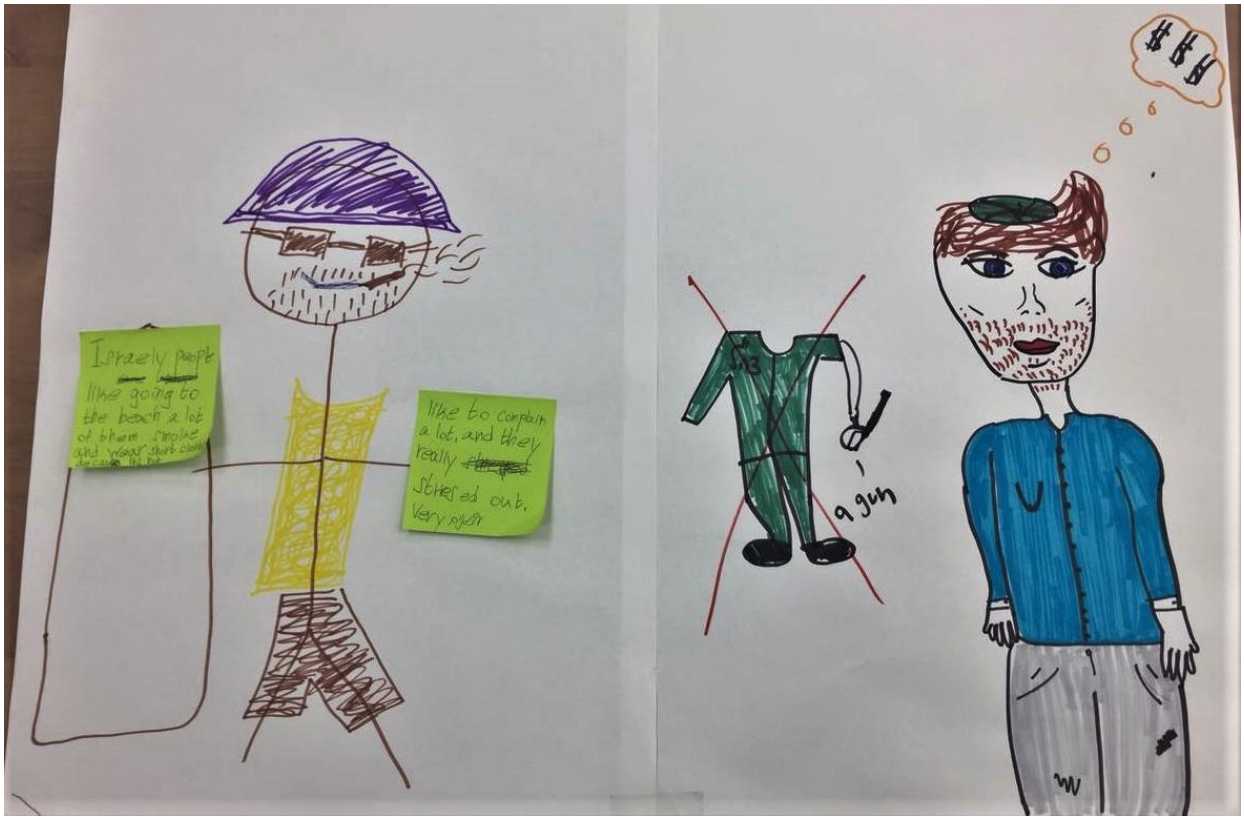


**FIGURE 24 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 4_2, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL, YEAR 9**

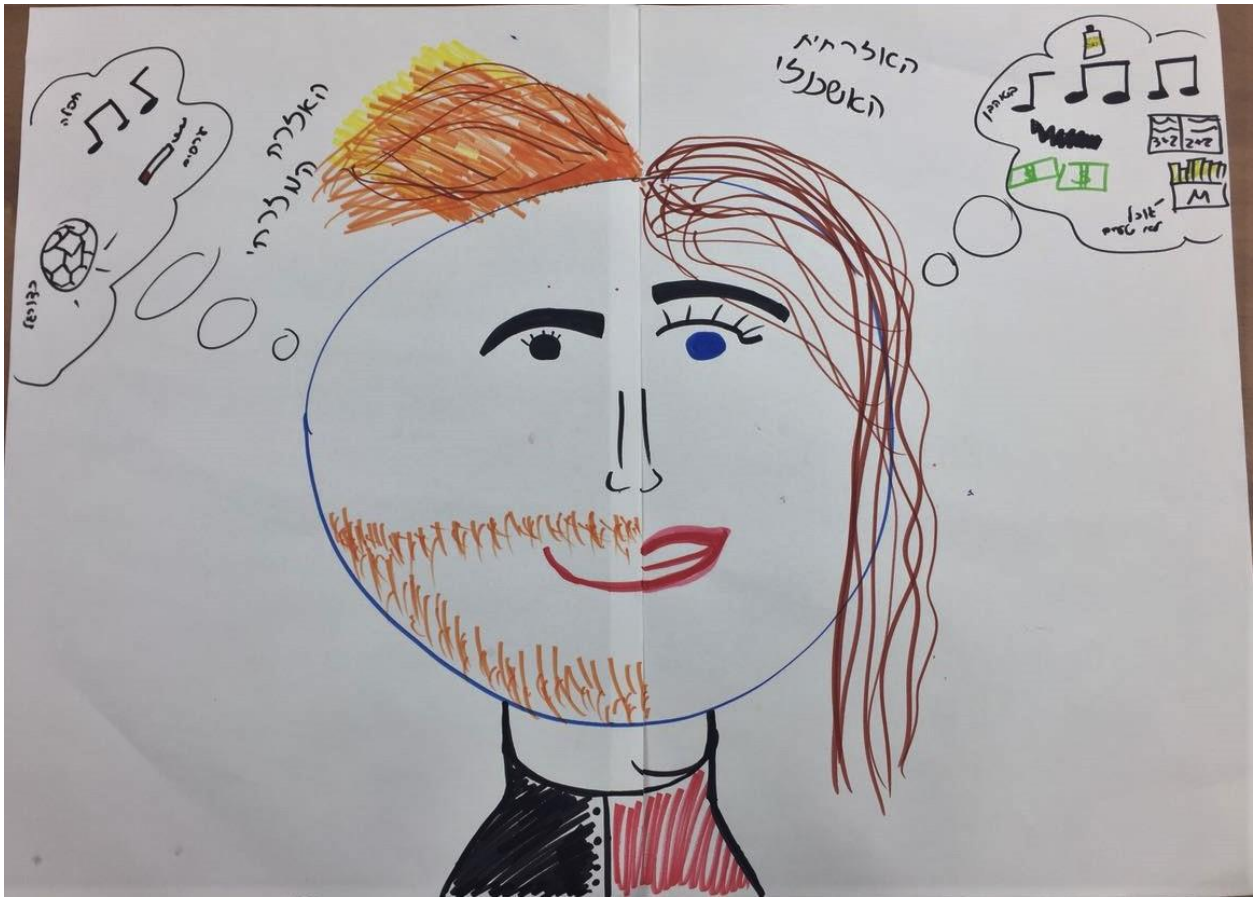


**FIGURE 25 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 1, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL**

**FIGURE 26 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 2, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL**

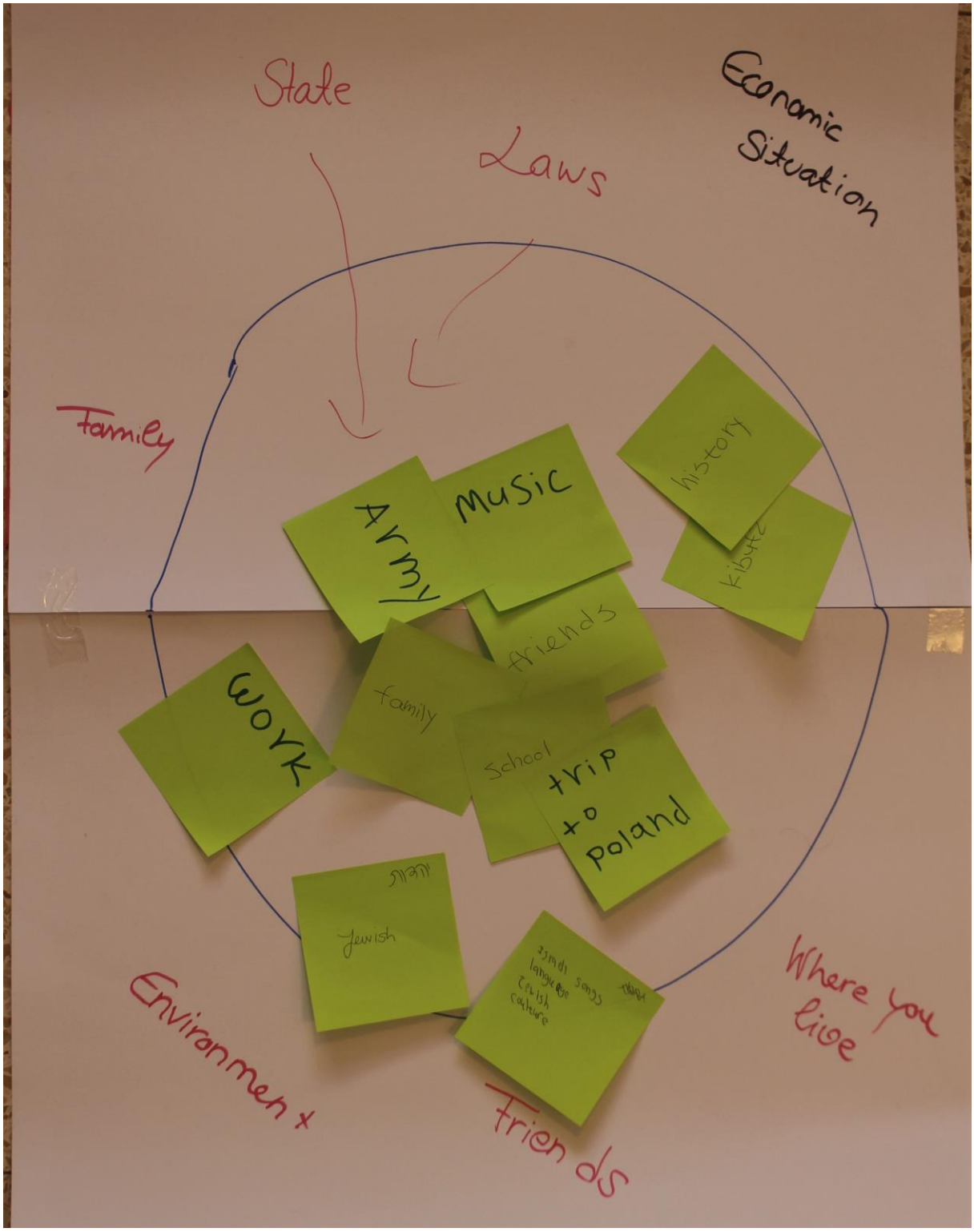
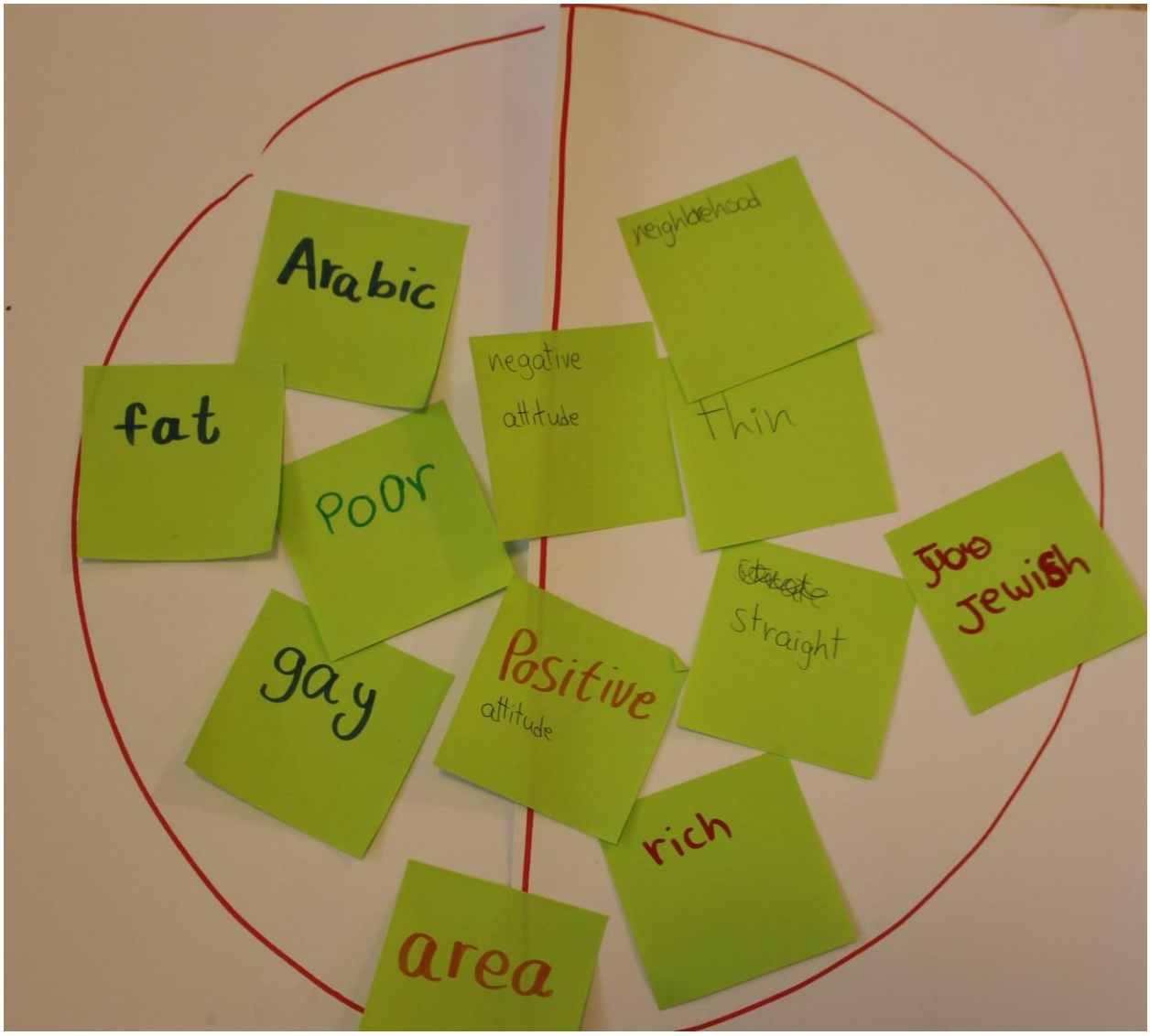


**FIGURE 27 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 3_1, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL, YEAR 9**

**FIGURE 28 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 3_2, JEWISH-ISRAELI SCHOOL, YEAR 9**



ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL

**FIGURE 29 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 1, ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL**

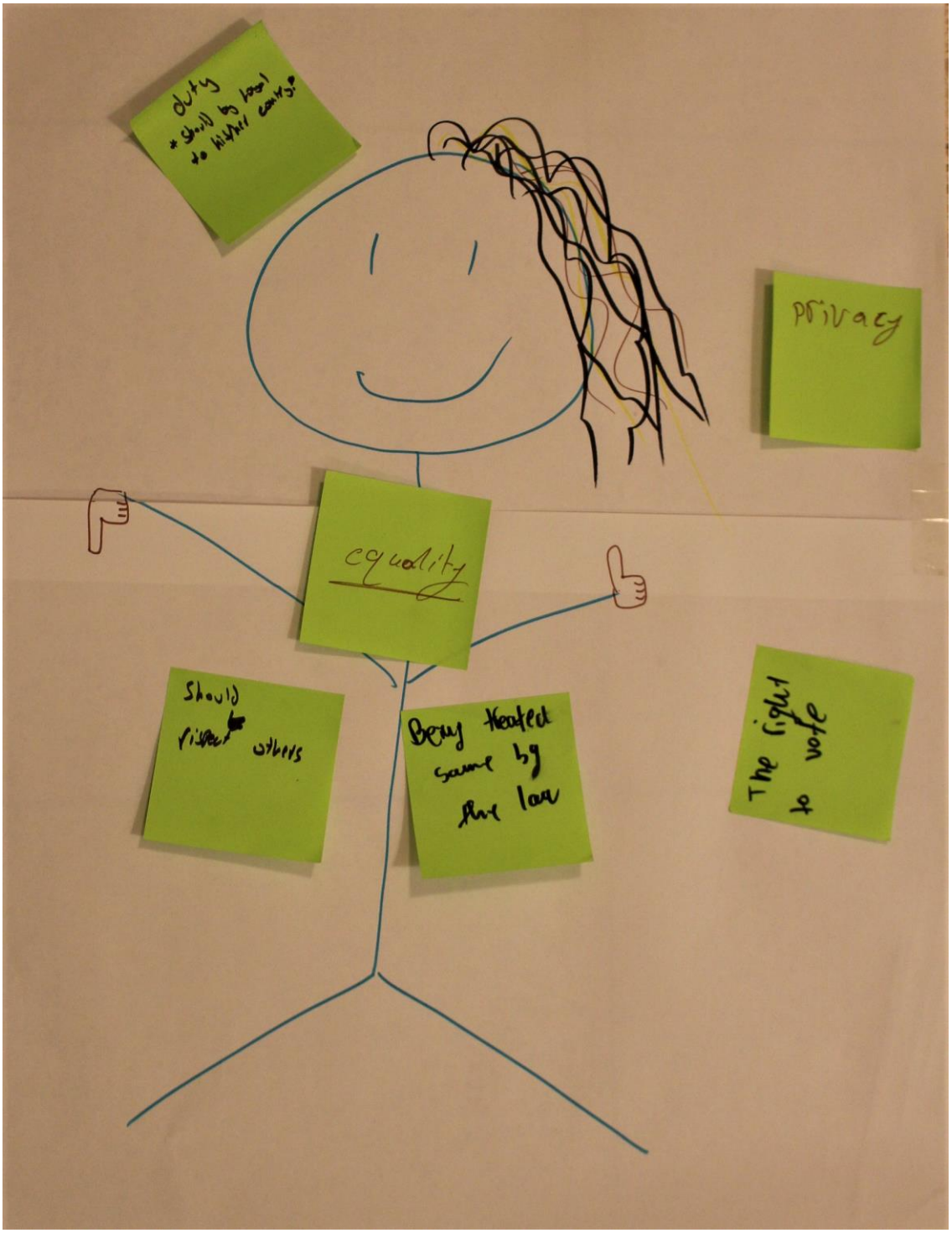


**FIGURE 30 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 2, ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL**

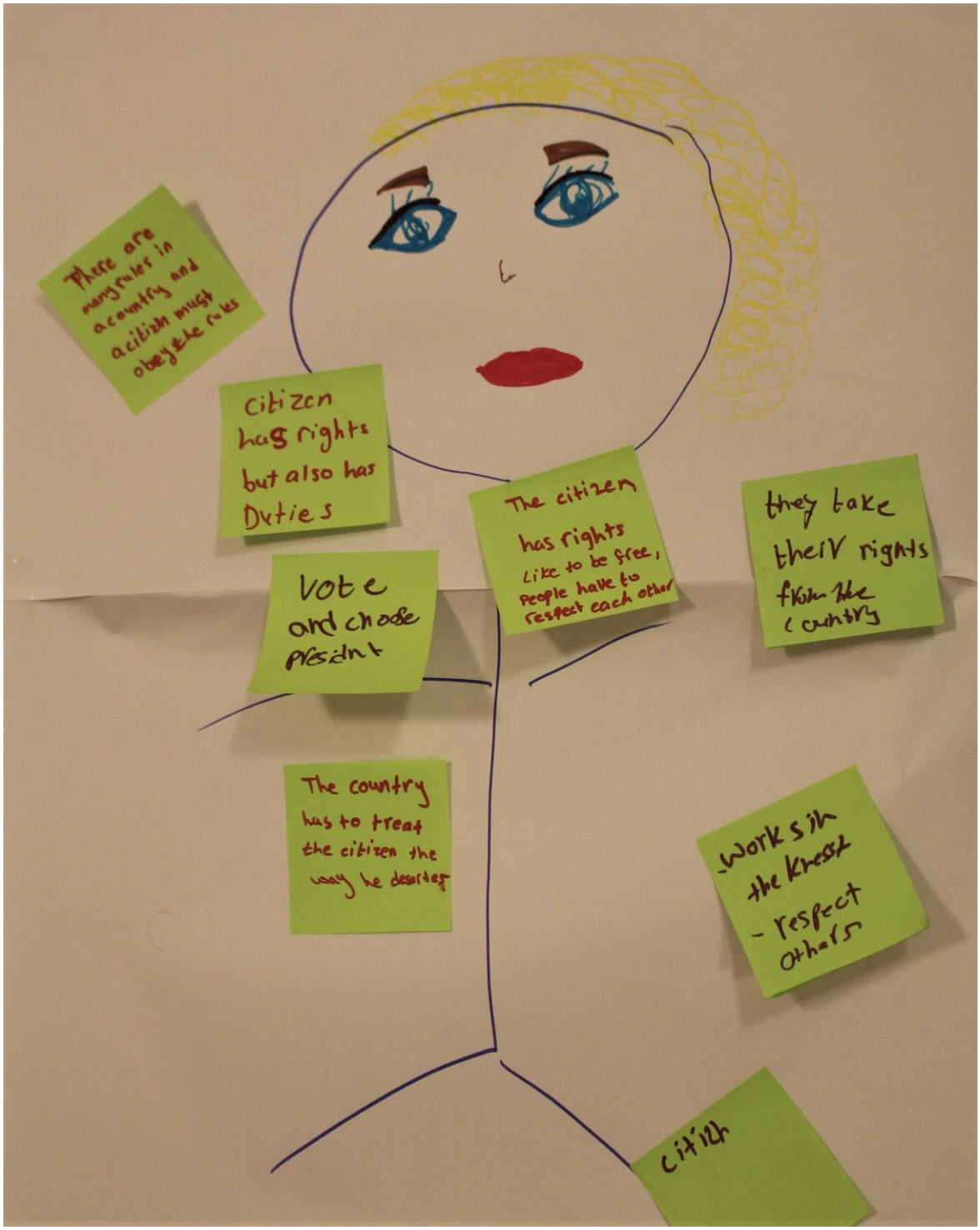


**FIGURE 31 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 3, ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL**

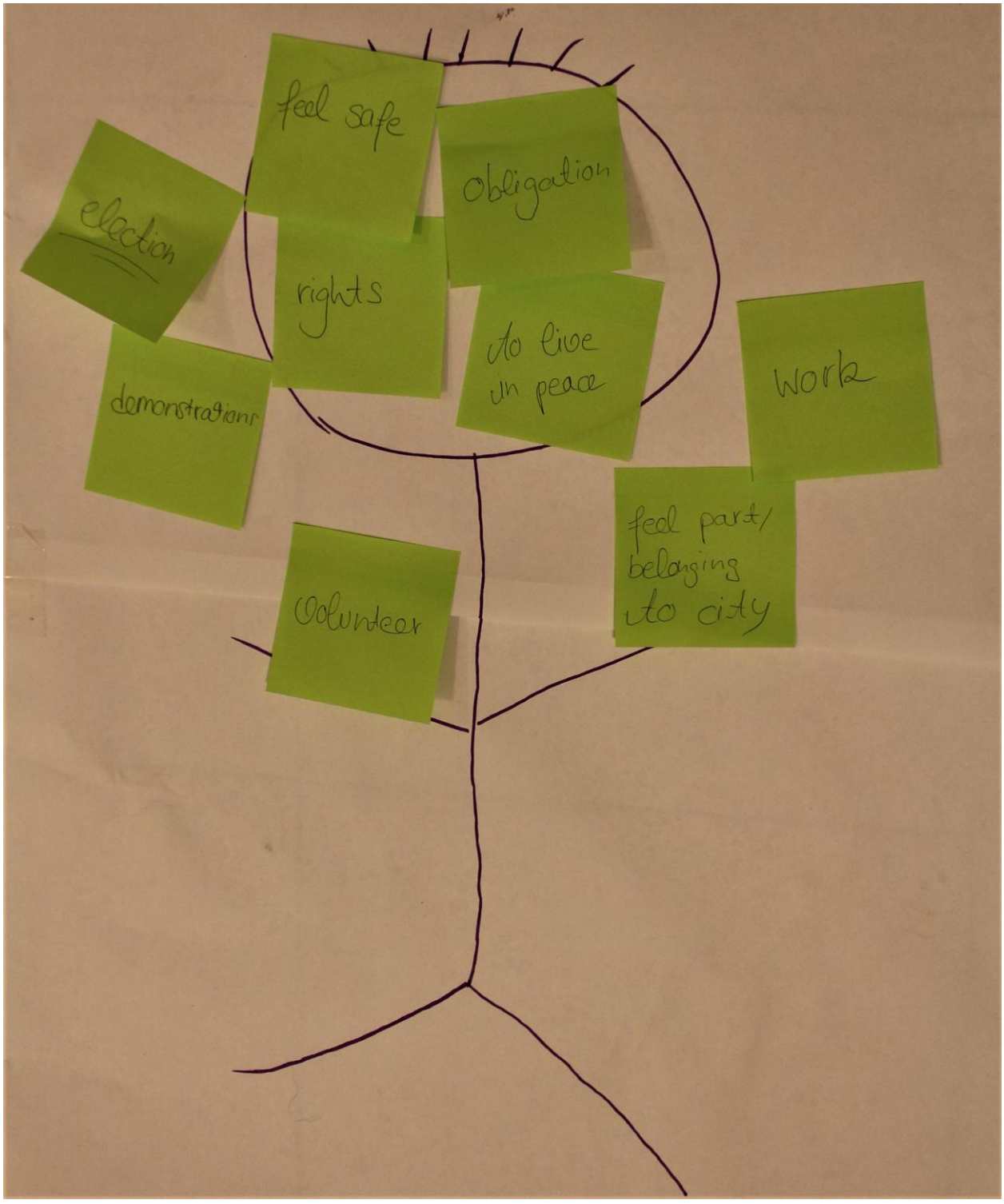


**FIGURE 32 CITIZEN FOCUS GROUP 4, ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL**

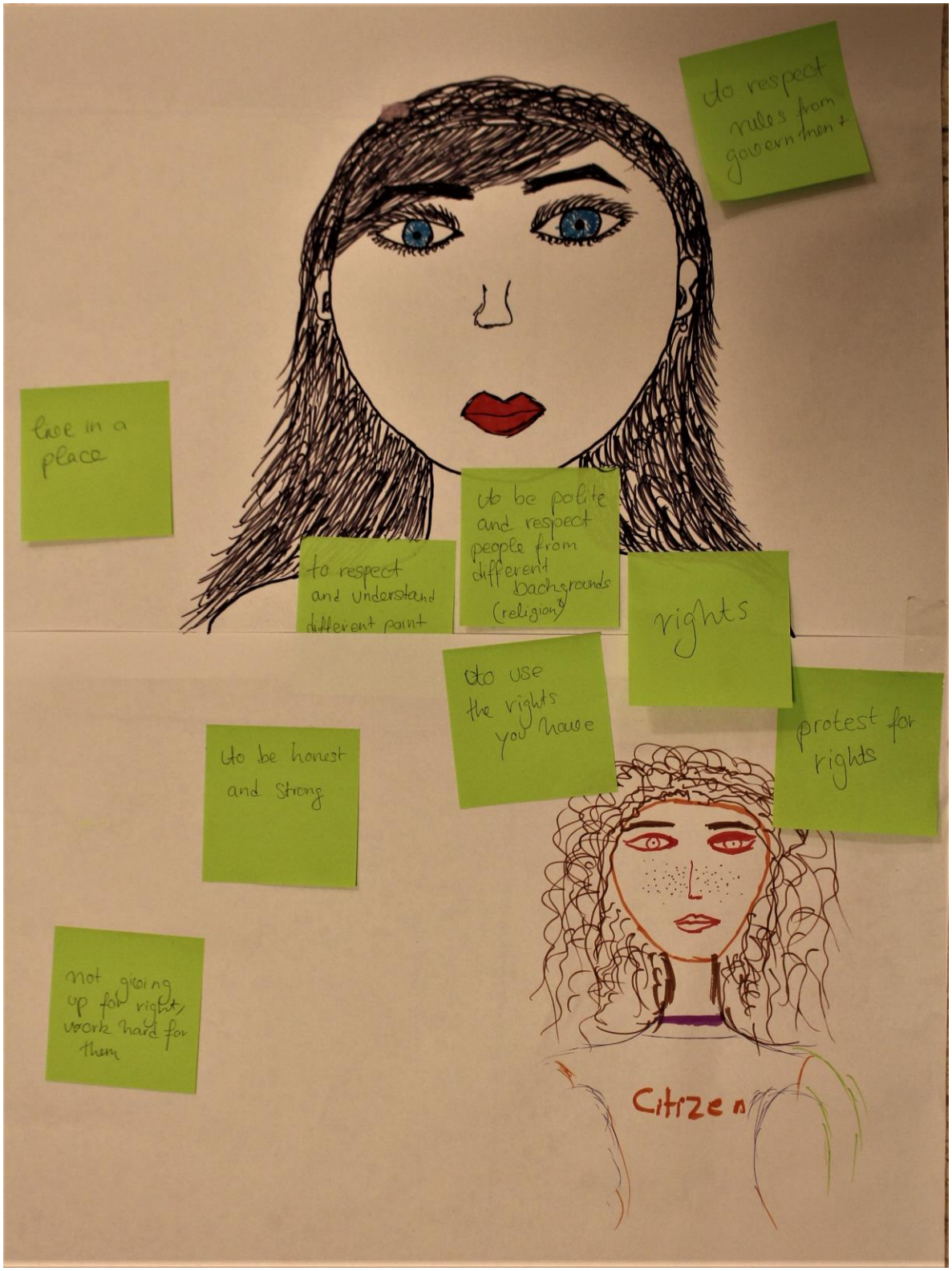


**FIGURE 33 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 1, ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL**

**FIGURE 34 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 2, ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL**

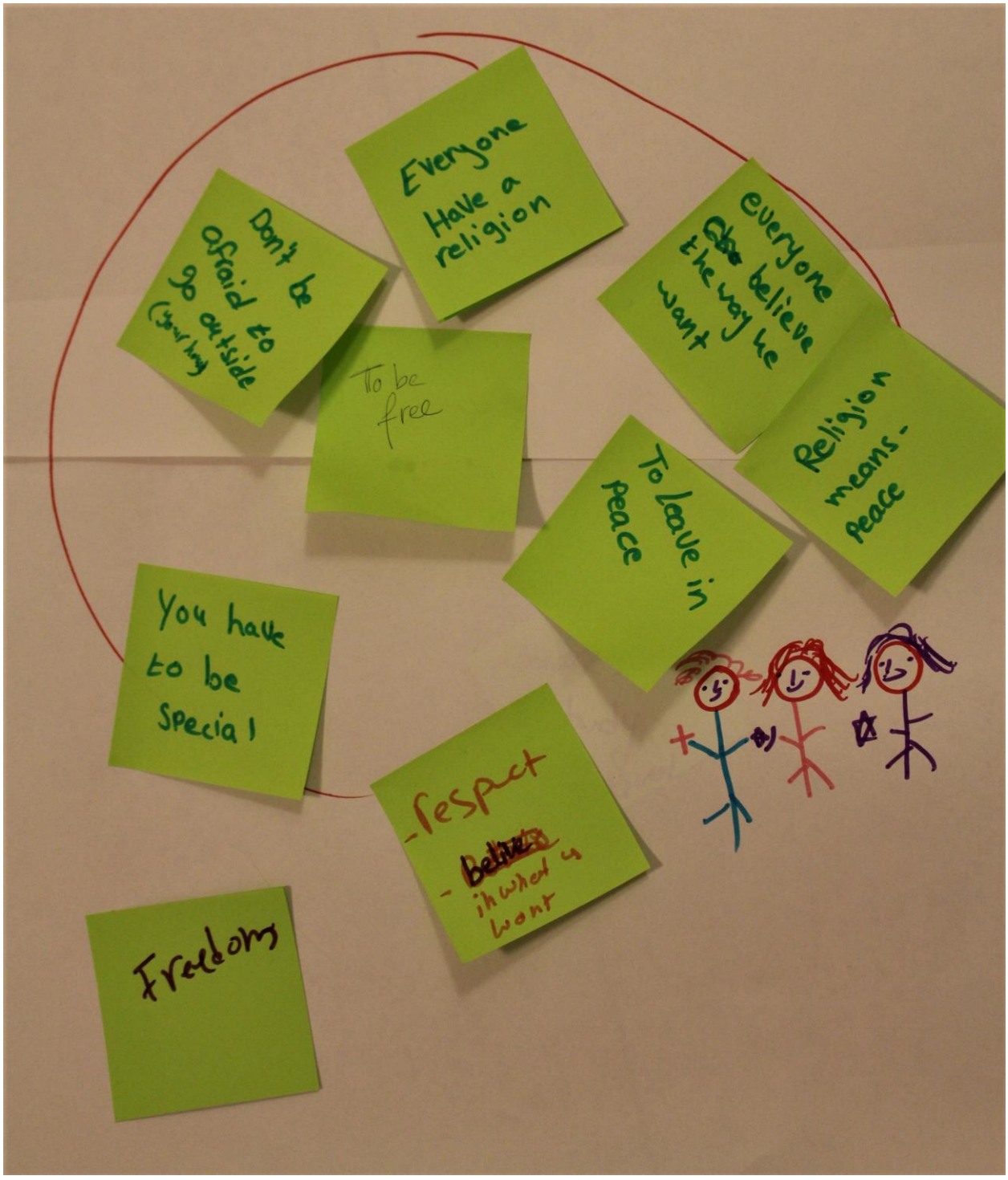


**FIGURE 35 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 3, ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL**

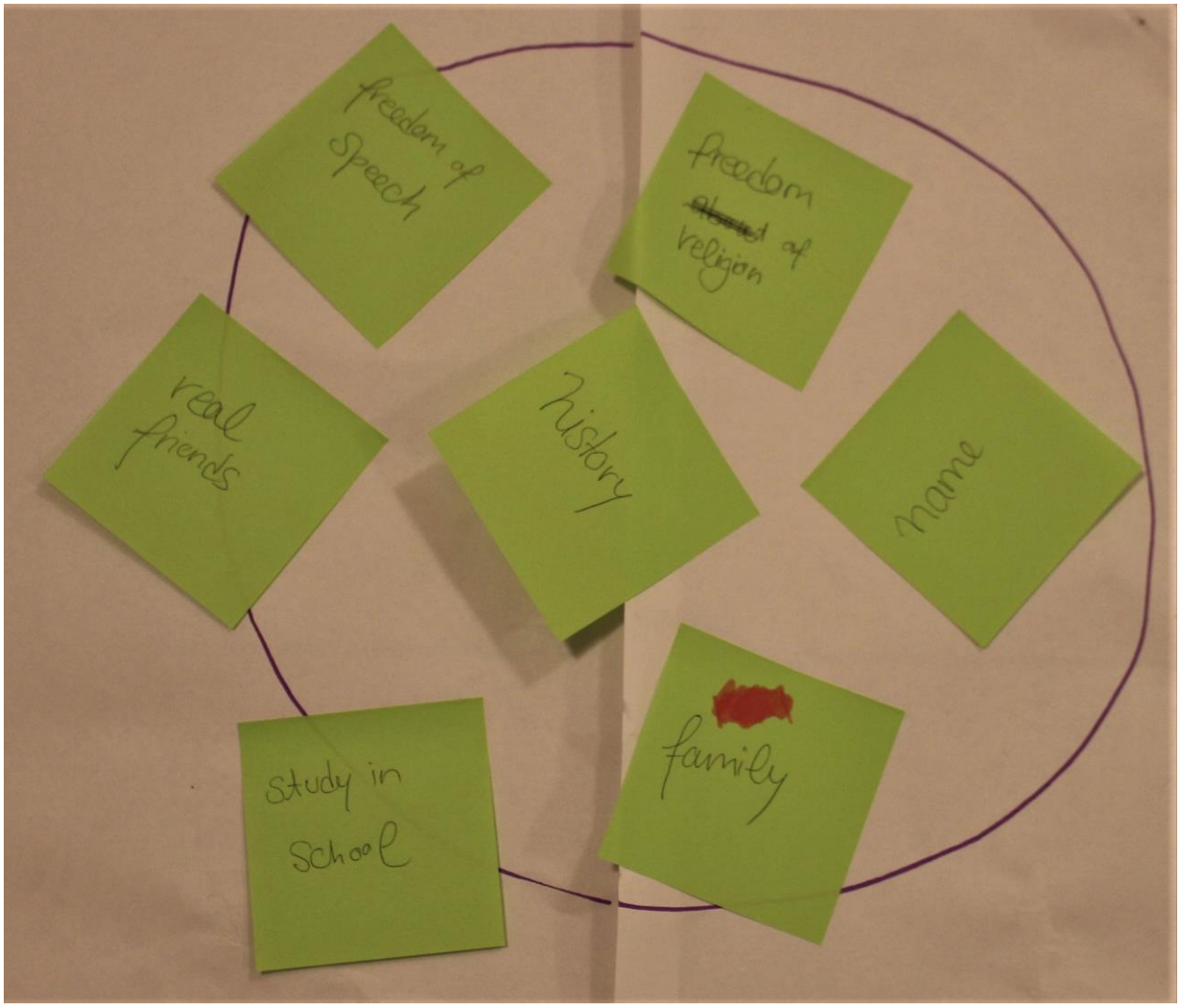
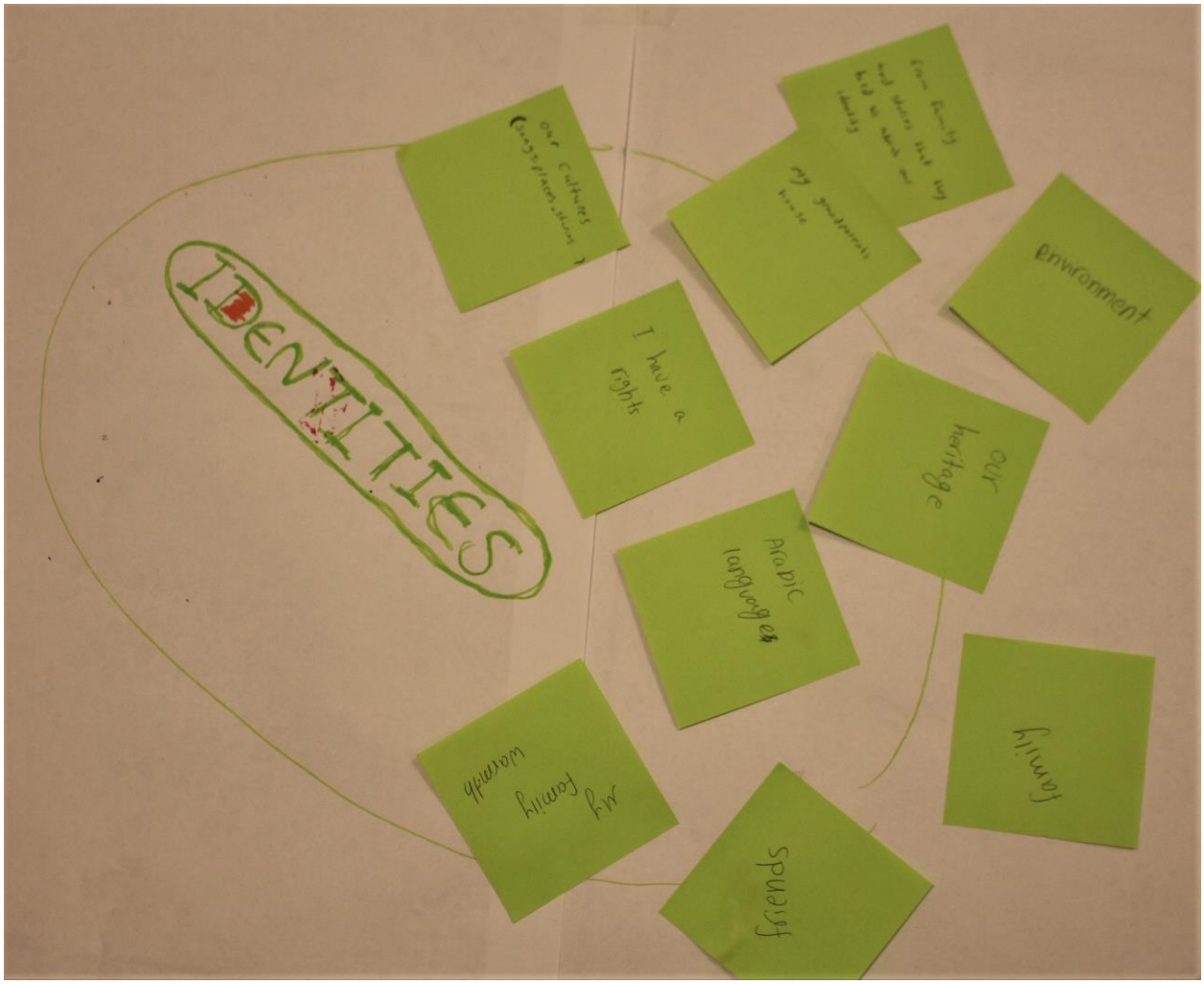


**FIGURE 36 IDENTITIES FOCUS GROUP 4, ARAB-PALESTINIAN SCHOOL**



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